DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

The Impact of US-Russian Security Competition on the Development of a Common European Energy Security Policy

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THE IMPACT OF US-RUSSIAN SECURITY COMPETITION ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COMMON EUROPEAN ENERGY SECURITY POLICY

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List of Abbreviations

ALDE	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
BCM	Billion Cubic Meters
BTC	Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan pipeline
CAATSA	Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CES	Common Economic Space, in Eurasia
CEEC	Central and Eastern European Countries
CFSP	Common Foreign and Security Policy
CMEA	Council for Mutual Economic Assistance
CoCom	Coordination Committee for Multilateral Export Controls
CRS	Congressional Research Service
CSU	Christian Social Union of Bavaria
DCI	Director of Central Intelligence
DNI	Director of National Intelligence
EAEU	Eurasian Economic Union
EaP	Eastern Partnership Policy
ECT	Energy Charter Treaty
EC	European Community
ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community Treaty
EEC	European Economic Community
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EIS	European Interceptor Site
ENI	Ente Nazionale Idrocarburi

ENP	European Neighborhood Policy
EP	European Parliament
Euratom	European Atomic Energy Community
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
FEC	Fuel-and-Energy Complex
FPE	Foreign Policy Executive
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GDR	German Democratic Republic
GNP	Gross National Product
IEA	International Energy Agency
IES	Institute of Energy Strategy
IGA	Intergovernmental Agreement
INGOs	International Non-governmental Organisations
IEM	Internal Energy Market
LNG	Liquefied Natural Gas
MAP	Membership Action Plan
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NDAA	National Defense Authorization Act
NSC	National Security Council
OFDI	Outward Foreign Direct Investments
OPK	Oboronnyi-Promyshlennyi Kompleks
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PfP	Partnership for Peace
PID	Project Information Document

PM	Prime Minister
SCGP	South Caucasus Gas Pipeline
SEA	Single European Act
SPD	Social Democratic Party
START	Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty
TACIS	Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States
TCB	Trillion Cubic Meters
TEC	Treaty Establishing the European Community
TEP	Third Energy Package
TGI	Turkey-Greece-Italy pipeline
UN	United Nations
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

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Signed Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the author of this thesis; that all references cited have been consulted by me; that the work of which the thesis is a record has been done by me, and that it has not been previously accepted for a higher degree.

Signature: ***Ioanna Mavromati*** Date: 11/04/2021

Abstract

Important questions about the development of a common European energy security policy have been unexplored in the literature. The literature on European energy security focuses on the EU's internal and external energy policy and explores issues ranging from the importance of speaking with one voice to who is leading European energy policy. Other studies focus on how much progress has been made towards the development of a common European energy security policy, what factors have delayed the creation of a common European energy approach, and what could explain the progress made in that direction in more recent times. These publications often attribute the development of the common European Energy security policy to the deterioration of relations between the EU and Russia and, more specifically, to Russia's aggressive foreign and energy policy towards Europe. However, these studies often ignore other factors that might affect the EU's energy politics. For example, despite the available empirical evidence, political scientists researching European energy security policy have apparently not been worried about the heavy US involvement in the EU's energy politics and the impact the deterioration of US-Russian relations might have on European energy security policy. This thesis aims to fill the gap in the literature by answering the following research question: To what extent has US-Russian security competition affected the development of a common European energy security policy?

To shed light on this question, this study developed and employed a new variant of Neoclassical Realism, the Two-Level Model.

The three case studies used in this thesis demonstrate that Great Power competition has affected the creation of the common European energy security policy. More concretely, the cases showed that as the competition between the US and Russia intensified, Washington and Moscow adopted measures that have both accelerated and delayed the development of the

common energy security policy in the EU. However, this thesis also showed that other important factors played a significant role in establishing the Energy Union.

Introduction

In the mid-2000s, energy security became a foreign policy priority in Europe. The over-dependency of the European member states on a single main supplier, Russia, in combination with several alarming developments, such as rising oil prices and global demand, the 2004 EU enlargement and the 2006 and 2009 gas disputes between Ukraine and Russia, turned energy security into one of the most critical security challenges that the European Union faces today.

Following the 2004 EU enlargement, the newest members of the European Union - three former Soviet republics (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania) and the former satellites of the USSR (Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia) - viewed their continued reliance on Russian energy sources as a threat to their national security. To increase their power vis-à-vis Russia, these countries sought ways to reduce their dependence on Russian natural gas and pushed for the development of a common energy security policy in Europe. In contrast, the oldest members of the European Union, such as Germany, Austria, France, and the Netherlands (Old Europe), saw bilateral energy partnerships with Russia as a way to enhance their energy security.

In any case, prior to 2009, energy policy-making was a national competence, and no meaningful progress was made towards developing a common energy policy before the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty. The Lisbon Treaty (entered into force on December 1, 2009) turned energy policy into a shared competence between the EU and its member states and moved energy policy into the ordinary legislative procedure. Even the Lisbon Treaty, however, conferred limited energy-policy making powers to the supranational level.

Despite all the progress made towards establishing a common energy security policy in the EU, European member states appear divided over the energy partnership with Russia,

and the EU is still not the main actor in the energy domain as EU member states remain the 'masters' of energy security policy.

These developments have sparked an enormous academic interest in the EU's energy security policy in recent years. As a result, there has been an increasing amount of literature on European energy security and EU-Russian energy relations. These have examined the EU-Russia energy interdependence, Russia's alleged coercive energy policy and divisions within Europe over the expansion of Russian gas infrastructure to Europe (Youngs, 2009; Mankoff, 2009; Proedrou, 2011; Maness and Valeriano, 2015; Pirani and Yafimava, 2016). And some of these publications (Baran 2007, Cohen 2009c) have concluded that Russia uses energy as leverage to increase its relative power to support its Great Power aspirations.

Not surprisingly, the 'increased' dependence of European member states on Russian energy supplies has also raised concerns on the other side of the Atlantic. There is a strong belief in Washington that Russia implements a 'divide and rule' strategy and uses energy as a tool to increase its influence over Europe - a traditional ally of Washington. The US has also expressed worries over the threats emanating from the increased energy exports, as increased revenues may translate into a more aggressive Russian foreign policy.

One might even argue that the United States often appears more concerned about Europe's dependence on Russian natural gas than the Europeans themselves. This is evident by the measures Washington has adopted to stop the expansion of Russian gas infrastructures to Europe and reduce Europe's dependence on Russian natural gas, measures that often do not find Europeans in agreement. However, this has not, to date, been reflected in the academic literature. Political scientists researching the European Energy security policy and the EU's energy partnership with Russia (Baran 2007; Feklyunina, 2008; Goldthau, 2008; Cohen 2009c; Newnham, 2011; Proedrou, 2012; Casier 2013; Mannes and Valeriano, 2015; Casier, 2016;

Romanova, 2016; Casier and DeBardeleben 2017) have not been intrigued by the heavy US involvement in the EU's energy politics.

For example, there has been no adequate academic attention on the US efforts to halt the expansion of Russian natural gas infrastructure within Europe or on the persistent US calls for diversification of European supplies and the development of a common European energy policy. Studies evaluated for this thesis failed to explore the possibility that the US initiatives might be part of the effort to contain Russia's growing power by undermining the source of that power. As a result, the impact of Great Power security competition on European energy politics remains largely under-investigated. This thesis contends that the impact of US-Russia security competition on EU member states' energy politics and the development of a common European energy security policy is much greater than the current literature has recognised.

What is the research project, and why is it important?

Important questions about the development of a common European energy security policy have been unexplored in the literature. This thesis aims to fill the gap in the literature by answering the following research questions: To what extent has US-Russian security competition affected the development of a common European energy security policy? Here, it is important to clarify that this study covers the period between 1990 and 2019 and assumes that US-Russian competition varies over time, and the more intense it is, the greater the impact on the development of the common energy security policy.

To answer the question, as explained in Chapter Two, this study used as a starting point Neoclassical Realism. Neoclassical Realism can account for state foreign policy choices by incorporating systemic pressure and domestic level variables in its explanation of international politics. However, neoclassical realists do not examine the impacts of that policy on the foreign

policy decisions of other, usually less powerful states. For this reason, this study developed and used the Two-Level Model, which allows for a two-level analysis: the Great Power Level (Level I) and the Intra-European Level (Level II). This, in turn, enabled the researcher to investigate each level in detail and explain how the actors at each level interpret and respond to threats and opportunities in their external environment. Most importantly, it allowed investigating how the developments at one level affected the developments at the other level.

As explained in Chapter Three, to evaluate the performance of the Two-Level Model in this study, the following hypothesis was be measured against empirical findings in the three case studies used in this research project:

> *The more intense the competition between the US and Russia, the greater its impact on European energy security policy.*

The results will show that the Great Power competition has affected the development of the common European energy security policy. More specifically, the findings show that as the competition between the US and Russia intensified, the impact of the measures that Moscow and Washington adopted on European energy security further increased. However, the case studies used for this thesis also show that other important factors played a significant role in establishing Energy Union.

This research project is important as it can shed light on to what extent the European energy security policy is a response to external pressure and incentives in addition to being internally generated. Here, it is essential to clarify that when this study talks about energy security, it refers to gas security.

The contribution of the project to the literature

This research project contributes to the academic literature in several areas. Specifically, the first contribution of this project is the examination of an original research question. So far, most studies on European energy security policy have focused on the internal aspects of energy security policy formulation and the impact of Russian interests on European energy security policy, largely ignoring US interests and the impact of US-Russian security competition on the development of a common European energy security policy.

This thesis holds the view that studying the development of the European energy security policy without considering the impact of US-Russian security competition or examining the EU-Russian energy relations without considering the American factor could be paralleled to studying the fall of an apple without considering the impact of gravity. In that context, the consideration of the impact of great power competition on the development of a common European energy security policy will have significant implications for research in this field. By undertaking this research, the thesis aims to contribute to the academic literature on European energy security policy, EU-Russian energy relations and US-Russian relations.

Another contribution of this research project is the presentation of a new variant of the Neoclassical Realist analytical framework. More specifically, while Neoclassical Realism constitutes the optimal theoretical basis for this study, due to the complexity of the research project, it could not be applied in its original formulation. For this reason, the author introduced a new variant of Neoclassical Realist theory, the Two-Level Model. In contrast to the original theory, the Two-Level Model allows for a two-level analysis: the Great Power Level (level I) and the Intra-European Level (Level II). This enables the researcher to examine each level in detail and explain how the actors at each level interpret and respond to threats and opportunities

in their external environment. Most importantly, it allows investigating how the developments at one level affected the developments at the other level.

This thesis also adds to existing knowledge by presenting empirical information and new insights based on that information. The empirical information collected for this study was obtained by analysing more than one hundred primary documents and a large number of secondary sources. Based on the evidence gathered, this thesis contends that US-Russian security competition has had a significant impact on the development of a common European energy security policy. The impact, however, varies across time; the more intense the competition between the United States and Russia, the greater the impact is on the development of a common European energy security policy.

Building on these findings, this thesis also contributes to the academic literature is through its analytical insights. The three case studies present a detailed assessment of the impact of great power competition on European energy policy. Overall, it is argued that US-Russian competition has affected the development of a common European energy security policy. The empirical materials obtained also demonstrate that there is a continuity in US policy to stop the expansion of Russian gas infrastructure to Europe. This is because, in the post-Cold War era, the US continues to see Russian gas exports to Europe as a source of Moscow's power. Policymakers in Washington hold the view that gas exports can increase Russian influence over Europe, while the increased income in hard currency from gas exports could translate into a more confident and aggressive Russia on the international scene, which could pose a threat to US national interests.

In addition to informing science, the findings of this study also have important policy-related implications. This research project will show that the Great Power competition has had a significant impact on the energy politics of EU Member states and the development of European energy security policy. The findings of this study could be used to inform

policymakers about the negative impact of the Great Power competition on energy security in Europe and help policymakers craft effective strategies that could limit such impact.

In summary, this research makes a number of significant contributions to the academic literature. It answers an original research question, presents a new variant of the Neoclassical Realist framework, and adds to existing knowledge by presenting empirical information and new insights based on that information. The findings of this study could also be used to inform policymakers about the impact of US – Russian security competition on energy security policy in Europe.

In Europe, Energy Security equals to Gas Security

The use of the term energy security dates back to the time of US embargoes in the 1960s (Lubell, 1961); however, the interest of scholars and experts in energy security grew significantly following the oil crisis of the 1970s. The academic interest in energy security declined in the late 1980s and 90s, following the normalisation of oil prices and the receding threat of political embargoes (Cherp and Jewell, 2014).

In Europe, it re-emerged following the Eastern enlargement of the EU in 2004, the Russia-Ukraine gas crises in 2006 and 2009, and the imperative to decarbonise energy systems (Yergin, 2006; Hughes and Lipscy, 2013; and Hancock and Vivoda, 2014). So, when policymakers and academics talk about European energy security, they usually refer to gas-supply security, and there are many reasons for this.

Over the past two decades, natural gas's share of the EU's energy mix has increased, unlike that for oil and coal (see Figure 1.1); it now accounts for about a quarter of the EU's gross inland energy consumption. Despite the decrease in demand for natural gas between 2005 and 2014, according to the International Energy Agency (IEA), there is some upside for gas

consumption as coal and nuclear plants phase out, and around 100 billion cubic meters (bcm) of long-term contracts will expire by 2025 (Zeniewski, 2019). Other factors that will contribute to natural gas demand growing faster than oil and coal are 'low prices' - compared to the high prices of alternative sources, as well as its 'ample supply and its role in reducing air pollution and other emissions' (IEA, 2017, 2).

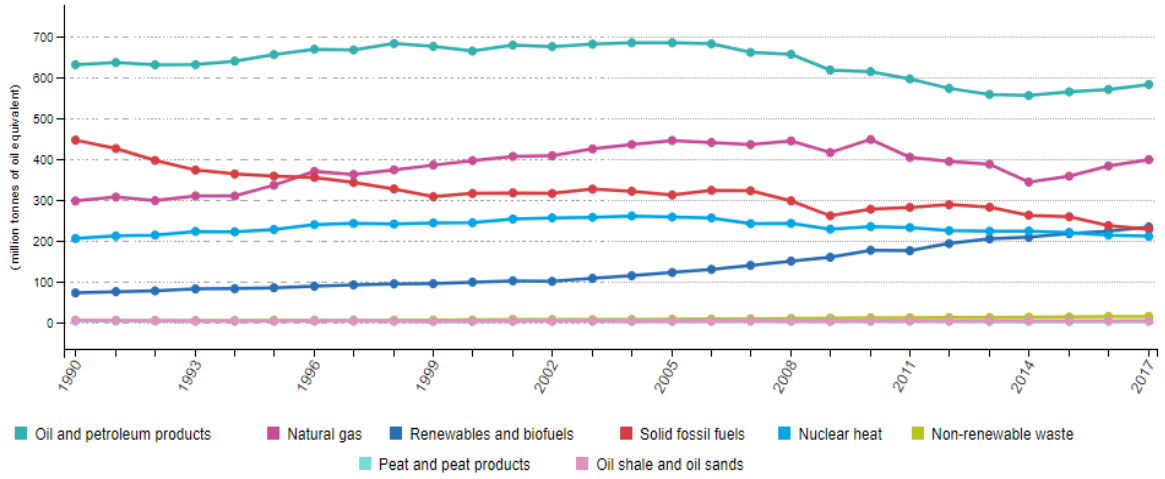


Figure 1 Gross inland energy consumption by fuel, EU-28, 1990-2017

Source: Eurostat, 2019.

At the core of the EU's gas security problem is that while the demand for natural gas in Europe has increased, gas production in the EU counties has declined over the past decade (see Figure 1.2). As a result, the majority of EU countries have to import most of the gas they consume. In 2018, the EU imported two-thirds of the natural gas it consumed. According to Eurostat, more than 40 per cent of it come from Russia, followed by Norway (35.1 per cent), Algeria (11.2 per cent), Qatar (5.4 per cent), Nigeria (3 per cent) and Others (5.4 per cent) (see Figure 1.3).

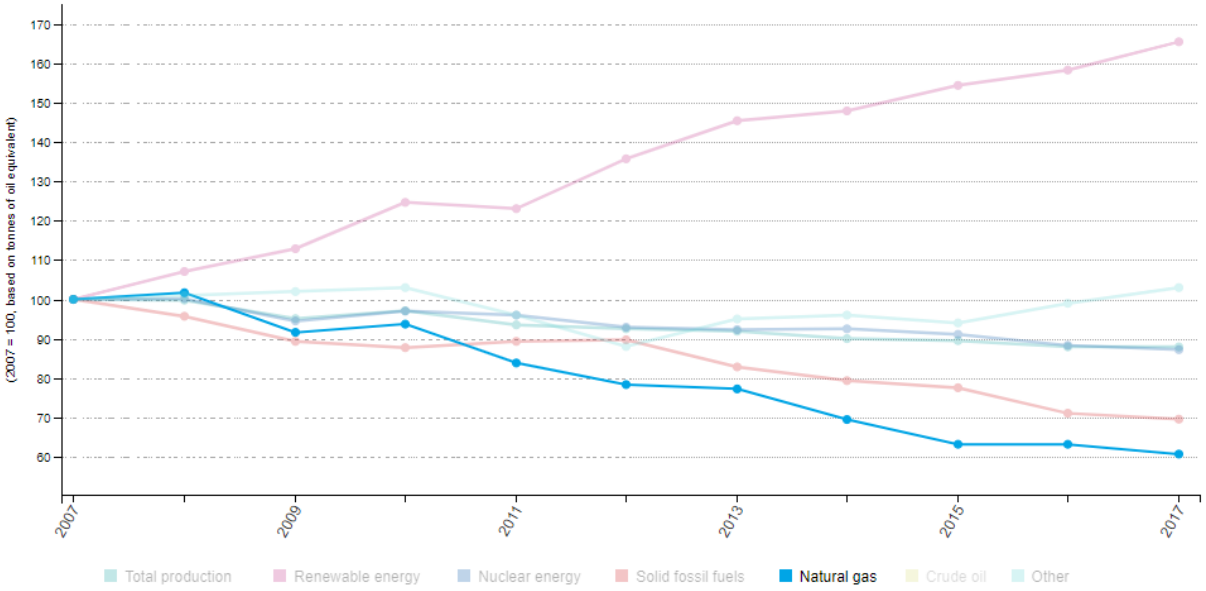


Figure 2 Development of the production of primary energy (by fuel type), EU-28, 2007-2017

Source: Eurostat, 2019.

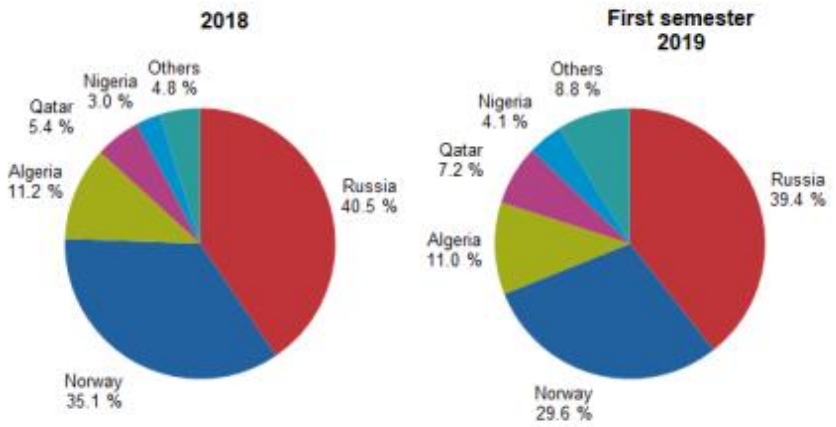


Figure 3 Extra-EU imports of natural gas from main trading partners, 2018 and first semester 2019 (share (%) of trade-in value)

Source: Eurostat, 2019.

The other major gas security challenge in the EU is the transportation of natural gas to Europe. The transportation methods of natural gas are limited. The transportation of gas to Europe takes place in two ways: via pipeline as gas or by ship in supercooled liquefied form,

also known as liquefied natural gas (LNG). Although the EU has a significant LNG import capacity, which could meet approximately 40 per cent of its gas demand (2018), member states' access in the Baltic region and South-East Europe is limited. In addition, most of the EU's regasification terminals are concentrated on the coastline of North-West and South-West Europe (Mete, 2019). Thus, despite the significant LNG capacity, pipeline gas has dominated the EU's gas supply (see Figure 1.4).

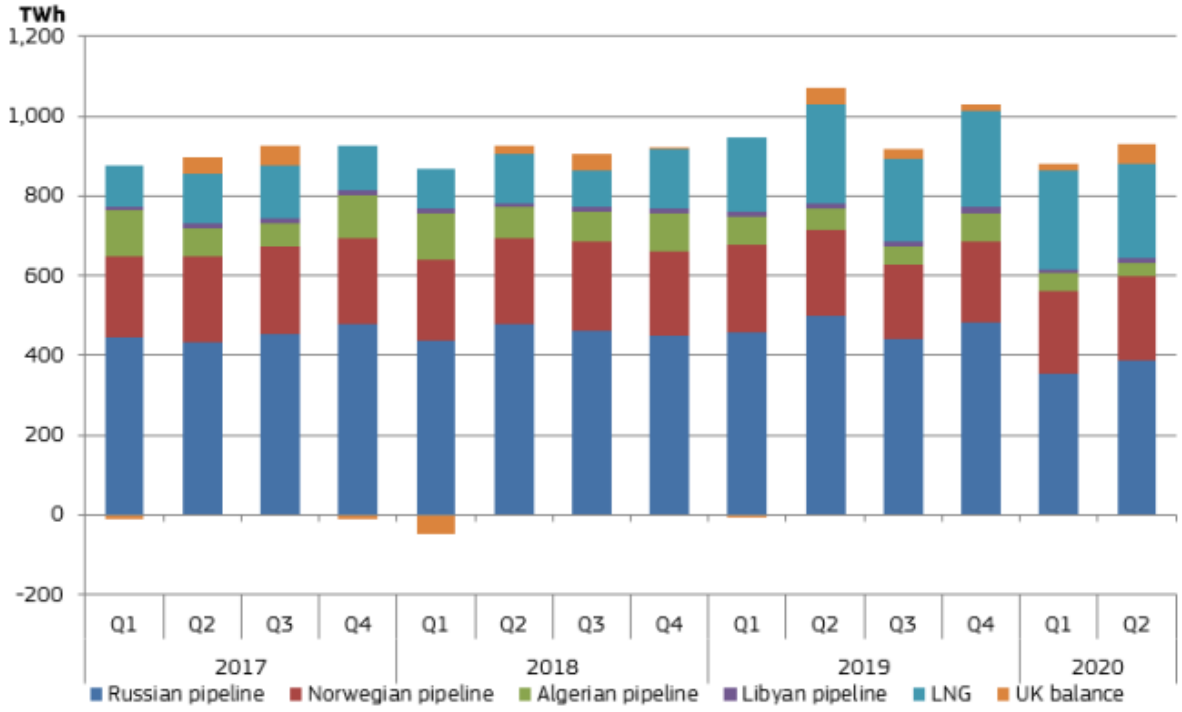


Figure 4 European gas imports by source

Source: European Commission, 2020.

The transportation of Russian natural gas to Europe proceeds through pipelines connecting gas fields in the North of Russia through the Unified Gas Supply System (an engineering complex encompassing gas production, processing, transmission, storage and distribution facilities in European Russia and Western Siberia) to Europe. The four key gas export routes from Russia to Europe are the Nord Stream gas pipeline, the Yamal - Europe gas pipeline, the Urengoy - Uzhgorod pipeline, and the Blue Stream pipeline (see Table 1). More

recently, in an effort to diversify its export routes, Russia has initiated two more gas transmission projects, Nord Stream II (55 bcm) and TurkStream (31.5 bcm) (Gazprom, 2020). TurkStream started operation in January 2020, while Nord Stream II was completed on September 10, 2021, after more than one year delay caused by sanctions imposed by the US in December 2019.

The net pipeline gas imports represented 82 per cent of the total EU gas imports in 2018 (Shakirov, 2019). Between 2010 and 2015, imports fluctuated in the range between 180 bcm and 200 bcm. However, afterwards, net natural gas imports to Europe increased significantly, reaching 244 bcm in 2018 (pipeline gas supply from external countries - intraregional trade not taken into account) (Shakirov, 2019). Experts attribute the increase in demand to more favourable economic conditions and a decrease in indigenous production (Shakirov, 2019).

Key Russian gas export routes to Europe	**Capacity**
The 'Brotherhood' pipeline or Urengoy - Uzhgorod pipeline (via Ukraine)	142 bcm
Nord Stream gas pipeline (*Directly connecting Russia* and *Germany*)	55 bcm
Yamal-Europe gas pipeline (via Belarus),	55 bcm
Blue Stream (via Turkey)	15 bcm
TurkStream (via Turkey)	31.5 bcm

Table 1 Key Russian gas export routes to Europe and capacities

Source: Created by the author according to information available on Gazprom.com

The main issue with gas supplies is that many European states rely exclusively on Russia for their gas supplies. As shown in Table 2, Bulgaria, Estonia, Finland and Latvia were entirely dependent on Russia in 2017 for their gas supplies, while the Czech Republic, Romania, Hungary and Slovakia imported more than 80 per cent of their gas from Russia. The

dependence rate of Austria, Poland, Greece, Lithuania, Germany and Italy ranged between 40 and 80 per cent. However, the dependence of Luxembourg, Slovenia, France and the Netherlands on Russian gas supplies was low, ranging between 15 and 25 per cent of their gas from Russia.

Year/ Country	**2004**	**2006**	**2008**	**2010**	**2012**	**2014**	**2016**	**2017**
Austria	72.6	57.1	56.7	63.8	63.2	63	-	-
Belgium	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Bulgaria	100			100				100
Cyprus	-			-				-
Croatia	100			97.8				0
Czech Republic	99.2			87.6				99.2
Denmark	-			0				0
Estonia	100			100				100
Finland	100			100				100
France	21.3			15.4				18.7
Germany	41.7			36.2				52.3
Greece	82.8			53.6				58.2
Hungary	80.7			94.1				95
Ireland	0			0				0
Italy	34.8			19.9				47.5
Latvia	100			100				100
Lithuania	100			100				53.7
Luxembourg	-			24				25.3
Malta	-			-				0
Netherlands	0	20.1	19.5	15.7	10.5	20.6	27.3	17.3
Poland	62.5			89.5				65.6
Portugal	0			0				0
Romania	100			97.8				98.9
Slovakia	100			100				84.6
Slovenia	59.9			47				23
Spain	0			0				0
Sweden	0			0				0
*UK	0			0				0

Table 2 Share (%) of Russia in total national imports of natural gas of each member state

*"0" Indicates that either there are no gas imports from Russia or Russia is not one of the three leading gas suppliers.

** "-" Indicates that no data is available.

Source: Created by the author according to information provided by Eurostat.

For many of these states, dependency on gas supplies from Russia and a low level of diversification of transmission routes constitute a serious challenge. This is particularly the case for the former Soviet republics and the former satellites of the USSR. Drawing from their past experiences, these states link energy security to their national security, as the reliance on Russian gas and oil for many of these states nullifies the potential for political independence from Moscow.

Concerns about dependence on gas supplies from Russia grew further following the 2006 and 2009 Russia-Ukraine gas disputes. For example, due to the 2009 gas crisis, all gas supplies to Europe via Ukraine were completely cut off for thirteen days to countries in south-eastern Europe - which are one hundred per cent dependent on Russian imports - and partially to other countries (Pirani, Stern, Yafimava). The lesson learnt from these crises was that in the event of gas supply disruption either due to political and economic disputes or a technical accident, the European countries that rely on one supplier or route for their gas imports would find themselves in a position of great vulnerability.

Overall, these factors (forecasts suggesting that the EU will continue to depend on Russian pipeline gas imports, the lack of alternative sources, the 2006 and 2009 gas crises and the tense relations with Russia) in combination with the more recent developments, such as the 2014 Ukraine events and the annexation of Crimea have to a large extent determined the European conception of energy security.

At the same time, these developments provided a window of opportunity to the Central and Eastern European States, who supported the idea of a common energy approach towards Russia to call for developing a common European energy security policy. The call for the development of a common European energy security policy reflects the realisation that when united, EU member states could increase their power vis-à-vis energy suppliers such as Russia. With this in mind, a common European energy security policy can be defined as a common

solution to common energy security problems. Since the EU defines energy security as uninterrupted access to energy sources at an affordable price, a common solution would entail speaking with one voice regarding these matters.

The US-European relations and the role of the US

Following the 2006 gas crisis, many US officials have warned that increased dependence on Russian energy is a threat to the EU. However, as the next chapters will demonstrate, Washington has been more worried about the impact of Europe's dependence on Russian gas on the EU-US relations and the huge income from energy exports that could encourage Moscow's assertiveness.

It is hardly a surprise that the US fears that Europe's dependence on Russian gas will drive a wedge between Europe and the US. Despite the occasional tensions over the past seventy years, the US policymakers value the partnership with Europe as serving US geostrategic and economic interests.

Since the end of the Second World War, successive US Administrations have supported closer relations with Europe, which Thompson describes as the world's most comprehensive, thicket of multilateral ties' (Thompson, 2004, 96). This is because it encompasses extensive bilateral political and economic ties between the US and individual countries in Europe, between the US and the EU and NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) - which underwent significant changes in the last thirty years.

Washington spearheaded the creation of NATO in 1949 (Miller, 2018) and encouraged the European integration project from its inception in the 1950s (Archick, 2021). These projects were considered essential to deter the Soviet threat at that time (ibid). And as the next chapters

will demonstrate, they are still playing an important role in the US efforts to contain Russia's growing power and influence.

Cowles and Egan (2012, 15) note that although the growth of uncertainty at the end of the Cold War and the Yugoslav Wars 'produced strong tensions in the alliance', the transatlantic relationship remained strong in the first decade of the post-Cold War era. NATO emerged as a revitalised institution that projects the US influence and power to Europe. The EU enlarged to include three new members and begun work on the accession of ten new member states. At the same time, it deepened its military efforts with the 1998 St. Malo agreement to create European Security and Defence Policy, which satisfied Washington demands for burden-sharing in European security.

However, since George.W. Bush moved into the White House in January 2001, transatlantic relations have been on a roller-coaster ride. Within just a few months of his Presidency, Washington announced opposition to several International Treaties, including the Kyoto Protocol and the International Court Treaty and withdrew from the US-Russia Antiballistic Missile Treaty. So by mid-2001, European leaders were complaining about American Unilateralism (Gowled and Egan, 2016).

While unilateralism was clearly the favoured mode of action by the Bush Administration (Bridoux, 2013), Washington objected to European plans to create an independent Rapid Reaction Force and, in general, any plans that could lead to the creation of an alternative to NATO (Gowled and Egan, 2016) as that would mean that the US could lose control over the European security matters.

In any case, the terrorist attack in 2001 triggered a wave of solidarity with the US, and international terrorism became the new common challenge (May and Hoenicke-Moore, 2013). The US and Europe joined forces to fight the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, but soon the war in Iraq created divisions between the US and some European states, leading to a dangerous

cooling of transatlantic relations. The Bush Administration favoured adopting unilateral policies that it expected its allies to follow blindly.

The war also divided the EU, with 'Old Europe' of Germany and France leading the anti-war camp and the 'New Europe' supporting Washington (Sakwa, 2017). Smith (2012, 229) notes that during 2003-2004, Washington policies were aimed at 'dividing the EU, and at isolating the French' who insisted on the use of the United Nations process. French alliance with Russian on this matter only increased the tension between the two sides (Smith, 2012).

Although transatlantic relations were at the lowest point in the last six decades, Gowled and Egan (2016) note that the transatlantic economy was flourishing. However, the economic recession, which began in 2007 in the US, spread to Europe, slowed down the European economy and led to a European sovereign debt crisis. This placed an additional strain on the US-EU relationship.

Bush's second term marked a period of rebuilding the US-EU relations, during which Washington appeared to step back from a unilateralist approach in dealing with international crises (Bugajski and Teleki, 2006). However, the US-EU relations remained largely asymmetrical due to Washington's unmatched military power and global interests.

The election of Barack Obama raised major expectations in Europe and marked a new era in the transatlantic relationship, mainly because he appeared to be anti-Bush in every respect and signalled the end of the unilateralist era of the Bush Administration (Gowles and Egan, 2016; Smith, 2012). Mix (2015) notes that global challenges, including but not limited to Russia's annexation of Crimea, the escalating civil war in Syria and the spread of terror in the Middle East, have also pushed the two sides toward a more cooperative approach. However, he highlights that 'sides have also encountered frustrations and reality checks that have reminded each side to be realistic about what it can expect from the other' (Mix, 2015, 2).

From early 2009, the Obama Administration expressed frustration with certain aspects of the transatlantic relationship. For example, similarly to previous US Administrations, the Obama Administration criticised what they saw as insufficient burden-sharing in NATO. Washington has also expressed concerns about EU regulatory barriers to trade and the EU's failure to speak with a single voice on foreign policy or defence matters (Archick, 2021).

Cowless and Egan (2016, 90) note that '[i]ntra-European divisions made Obama's NATO policy difficult'. The initial 'reset' in relations with Russia worried the 'New Europe' but assisted the development of ties between the 'Old Europe' and Russia. At the same time, different European states had expressed concerns about Washington's shift on the European ballistic missile defence program. However, despite this, US' European allies recognised the centrality of NATO for collective defence, which had emerged with a new purpose after Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 (ibid).

Mix (2015, 6) notes that the developments in Ukraine 'altered the trajectory of the US outlook on European defense issues' and had driven 'calls for NATO to return to its traditional vocation as an alliance focused on collective territorial defense'. But, most importantly, the Ukraine crisis made Europeans realise that there is a need to increase defence spending and develop military capabilities (ibid).

In response to these developments, President Obama proposed the European Reassurance Initiative (ERI) in June 2014 - renamed Europan Deterrence Initiative (EDI) in 2017 - to reassure his European Allies of Washington's commitment to European security (Eichler, 2021). ERI was a key element of US strategy to counter what Washington considered as Moscow's provocative military actions (BrzezinskI, 2015). More specifically, the initiative extended reassurance measures, including troop rotations to Poland and the Baltic states and pre-positioning tanks and other military equipment to Eastern Europe.

Prior to the crisis in Ukraine, discussions about the future of NATO revolved around the declining European defence budgets and growing gap between US and European military capabilities, which could make defence cooperation more difficult by further increasing NATO's reliance on US military capacity (Mix, 2015). But the developments in Ukraine ensured that Washington would remain committed to European security (Gowles and Egan, 2016).

Following the election of Donal Trump, US-European relations faced significant challenges. President Trump expressed considerable scepticism about the US policy toward Europe, treated the EU as a rival, imposed tariffs on the EU, promoted the resurgence of nationalism in Europe, voiced frustration with insufficient burden-sharing and even questioned NATO's enduring utility (Szewczyk, 2021; Tosbont and Cusumano, 2019). Other US-European divisions existed on relations with Moscow and Beijing, US military actions in Syria and Afghanistan, Iran nuclear deal, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, arms control and climate change.

While Europe has had many 'fights' with US Presidents over the years, previous US-EU disagreements have been over policies. However, Washington has never before been so openly hostile to the core institutions or questioned the value of transatlantic unity (Whineray, 2020; Glasser, 2018). President Trump was the first US president to undermine European integration and threaten to withdraw from NATO.

However, no matter how bad the transatlantic relationship was under Trump, he had little option but to assure US support for NATO and European security. If the US decided to withdraw from the alliance, Washington would risk losing much of its influence in Europe and opening the door for Russia to fill the power vacuum created by the US military disengagement. The US has all these years sought to prevent the rise of a rival power in Europe; withdrawing from NATO, in place since 1949, would be a serious blow to US interests (Mills and

Rosenberg, 2015). Thus, it is only logical for the US to continue to contribute to the alliance more than any of its European allies.

The transatlantic relationship improved under Biden Administration, which has prioritized improving relations with Europe and rebuilding trust. President Biden has reiterated American commitment to NATO and pledged to work with the EU and European governments on global concerns, including human rights-related sanctions on Russian and Chinese officials, the withdrawal of US and NATO forces from Afghanistan, and relaunch a bilateral dialogue on China (Archick, 2021). European officials welcome the Biden Administration's renewed commitment to multilateralism.

Biden, like Obama, views cooperation with European states and the EU as key to countering challenges posed by Russia and China, and other authoritarian powers. However, despite the improvement in US-European relations under Biden, there remain major differences and tensions over issues such as NATO burden-sharing, the instability in Afghanistan following the withdrawal of US and NATO military forces and industrial metal tariffs imposed by Trump but not dropped yet and Europe's dependence on Russian gas, among other things.

As the next chapters will demonstrate, the latter issue has been of particular concern to successive US Administrations as it could be used not only to drive a wedge between the US and the EU but also to increase Russia's relative power vis-à-vis the US. For this reason, the US had used its special relations with the EU and NATO to stop the expansion of Russian gas infrastructure to Europe and restrict the export of Russian, even if that caused strains in the US-European relations.

Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is structured in nine chapters. The First Chapter (Literature Review) analytically discusses the publications on various aspects of European energy security policy, the EU's energy relations with Russia and the various facets of US-Russia security competition. The conclusion drawn here is that no systematic study of the impact of US-Russian security competition on the development of a common European energy security policy has been undertaken.

Chapter Two discusses several theories of International Relations and concludes that neoclassical realism seems to be the best analytical framework for this research project. However, this study contends that, due to the complexity of the research question, neoclassical realism in its original formulation cannot be applied to this particular case. In that context, this thesis develops and presents a Two-Level Model. This new variant of neoclassical realism will be employed to evaluate the causal impact of the great power security competition on the development of a common European energy security policy.

Chapter Three discusses the methodology adopted in this thesis to answer the research question. More concretely, it presents the approach taken for the investigation of the specific topic and explains how the researcher has chosen to integrate different components of the study in a way that helps to ensure that the research question is addressed effectively. This chapter also explains why case study research design is considered an optimal research design choice. Furthermore, it discusses the research methods used, identifies possible problems during the research, and addresses them accordingly. Finally, this chapter also introduces and discusses the three cases selected:

- Case Study No 1 – The Energy Union
- Case Study No 2 – The South Stream and Nord Stream I pipelines

- Case Study No 3 – The Nord Stream II pipeline

Chapter Four examines US-Russia relations in the post-Cold War era with the aim to place the current research in a wider political context. It finds that following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, there were no efforts made by the West, and in particular by the US, to reconstruct the European security architecture to include Russia. In contrast, this chapter finds that Russia was misled, ignored and isolated, which led to the realisation in the Kremlin that the West cannot be trusted. Thus, to defend its interests, Russia would have to restore its great power status. This chapter also investigates the EU-Russian relations in the post-Cold war era and finds that while both parties had high expectations at the beginning of their partnership, 'low politics' (matters less vital for the survival of the state) predominated in their relationship until the mid-2000s (Light, 2008, 84). However, while a number of developments led to the deterioration of their relations by 2009, the 2013 Russia-Ukraine crisis and the 2014 annexation of Crimea sent their relationship to its lowest point since the end of the Cold War.

Chapter Five then examines the evolution of energy policy in the EU since 1952 and finds that, although the first Treaties of the European Union were energy-related, energy policy became a foreign policy priority in the EU only in the mid-2000s. Overall, this chapter finds that during the Cold War, US-Soviet 'energy wars did not trigger intra-European competition for the reason that, at this time, European states viewed their energy partnership with Russia as an opportunity for doing 'business as usual'. European member states during the Cold War did not share the American view that energy reliance on Soviet natural resources was a threat to their security and thus did not see the value of transferring any energy security policy-making powers to European Institutions.

This chapter also shows that American policymakers were convinced that the Kremlin was weak and would remain so for a long time in the early post-Cold War era. With a weak

Russia not being seen as a threat, the EU member states' reliance on Russia did not seem problematic to Washington. The assumption that Moscow could re-emerge as a threat to US interests in Europe was only expressed as late as 2003. By this time, no serious efforts had been made to develop a common European energy security policy.

Chapters Six and Seven investigate the impact of US-Russia security competition on European energy politics between 2004 and 2014. More specifically, they examine some of the key issues surrounding the impact of US-Russian competition on the construction of the South Stream and Nord Stream I pipelines. These chapters find that as the competition between Russia and the US grew, the US put significant efforts into presenting European dependence on Russian gas as a threat to the EU member states' energy and national security. US efforts found 'New' Europe in agreement; however, 'Old' Europe insisted on seeing its energy partnership with Russia as an opportunity to enhance its energy security.

These chapters found that the Great Power competition and, more specifically, the US and Russian policies adopted to either contain rival's power and influence or increase their own affected the development of European energy security policy

Similarly, Chapter Eight investigates the impact of US-Russia security competition on the development of a common European energy security policy between 2015-2020 and the key issues surrounding the construction of the Nord Stream II pipeline, a Nord Stream I twin pipeline. This case shows that the threat of growing Russian influence in Europe prompted Washington to build and back an intra-European coalition to oppose Nord Stream II. In this context, the US has also strongly supported the development of a common European energy security policy. On the other hand, Russia's special deals with individual EU member states have significantly delayed various efforts to establish a meaningful common European energy security policy.

Finally, the Conclusion draws on the findings of this research project. More specifically, this chapter highlights that two out of three case studies have shown that Great Power competition has significantly affected European energy politics and the development of a common energy security policy in the EU, but the impact varies across time. The materials analysed for this project demonstrate that the more intense the competition between Washington and Moscow was, the greater its impact was on the development of a common European energy security policy. For example, in the early post-Cold War era (until 2004), a weakened Russia was not seen as a threat to the US, and therefore the reliance of the EU member states on Russian resources was not viewed as a threat by the US. In contrast, between 2005 and 2019, US-Russian relations began to deteriorate, and the competition between Washington and Russia gradually intensified. This resulted in more measures being adopted by the US aimed at reducing the dependence of EU member states on Russian gas supplies and more pressure put on the European states to diversify supplies away from Russia and speak with one voice.

This chapter also summarises this study's original contributions to the literature and explains how the Two-Level Neoclassical Realist model informed this study. The final two sections of this chapter explain the limitations of this research project and discuss the ample opportunities for further research related to this study.

Chapter 1- Literature Review

This chapter aims to gain an understanding of the existing research and debates relevant to EU energy security policy, EU-Russian energy relations and US-Russian relations and to identify inconsistencies and gaps in the research. It consists of two sections. The first section will review the existing publications on European energy security policy and EU-Russian energy relations, and the second will discuss US-Russian relations in general.

1.1 European energy security policy and EU-Russian energy relations

Energy trade is an essential component of EU-Russian relations. According to Perovic, Orttung and Wenger (2009), energy relations between Europe and the Soviet Union date back to the late 1950s, when pipelines were built to transfer oil and gas to the Eastern European members (Poland, Eastern Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria) of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA). The flow of hydrocarbon to Western Europe began in the late 1960s, as European states sought to reduce their reliance on oil and increase the share of natural gas in their energy mix (Perovic, Orttung and Wenger, 2009).

In the next decade, severely affected by the 1970s energy crises, many European states sought to diversify away from the Middle East, thus allowing the Soviet Union to regain significance as an oil and gas supplier (Perovic et al., 2017). As a result, in the following years, energy exports to Europe provided the Soviet Union with 60 per cent of its hard currency income, and the export pipelines created a strong commercial bond between Eastern and Western Europe even though at that time Europe was divided by the Iron Curtain (Perovic, Orttung and Wenger, 2009).

At the end of the Cold War, energy trade remained an essential component of the EU's relations with Russia. Almost thirty years later, Russia is Europe's main non-European energy supplier, providing 30 per cent of its oil and coal and over one-third of the Union's natural gas supplies (Eurostat, 2018).

In fact, it was Russia's increased energy exports in combination with high energy prices that allowed Russia's recovery from the economic crisis of the 1990s. Earnings from the exports of oil, gas and refined oil products rose from $27 billion in 1998 to $217 billion in 2017 (Aggarwal and Govella, 2012), allowing Moscow to build up its currency reserves and start repaying its foreign debt obligations (Trenin, 2006). More specifically, in 2018, oil and gas revenues made up approximately 40 per cent of Russia's federal budget. Russia's energy exports not only enabled the Kremlin to invest more funds in its military sector but also proved to be a powerful foreign policy tool that Moscow could use to restore its status in the international system.

Overall, one would expect that with the dismantling of the Iron Curtain, EU-Russia relations would progress and flourish (Haukkala, 2011; Belyi, 2014). Instead, since the mid-2000s, EU-Russian relations have deteriorated. Several developments contributed to the worsening of the relationship, including the 2006 Russia-Ukraine gas crisis.

More specifically, on January 1, 2006, when the Russia-Ukraine gas dispute peaked, Moscow cut off gas supplies to Ukraine. Many European countries reported a fall in the volume of their gas supplies, as around 80 per cent of Europe's gas imports from Russia run through Ukrainian pipelines. Although the gas supply was restored following an agreement made between the two sides on January 4, 2006, the realisation that energy dependence on Russia had increased Europe's vulnerability catapulted energy security to the top of the EU's foreign policy agenda (Baran, 2007).

However, Youngs (2009) points to other factors besides the 2006 gas crisis that pushed energy to the top of the European foreign policy agenda. These are the rise in the price of oil, increased demand for gas but lack of alternative sources to Russian gas, either due to falling production of gas in European countries or political instability in several third-country suppliers.

Although the Russia-Ukraine gas dispute in 2006 is often viewed as a wake-up call for the EU (De Haas, 2011), European member states remained divided over energy partnership with Russia for a long time. This, in turn, significantly delayed the development of a common European energy security policy.

The unwillingness of European states to converge towards a common EU energy security policy is attributed to differentiated interests. For example, the states of the 'New' Europe (former Soviet states) depend on gas imports primarily from only one country, Russia. Due to their often strained relations with Russia, energy independence is inextricably linked to their national security (Valasek 2005). In contrast, 'Old' Europe, at least, until the recent escalation of the conflict in Eastern Ukraine - viewed Russia as a valuable partner. More specifically, except for Finland, Austria and Greece, the gas dependence of these states on Russian resources did not exceed 40% of their overall consumption. Hence, for them, imports of Russian resources were viewed as a contribution to their diversification strategy and consequently to their energy security (Geden, Marcelis and Maurer 2006).

Scholars investigating the EU energy security policy show no particular interest in trying to define what is meant by 'common European energy security policy'. The literature on European energy security focuses on the EU's internal and external energy policy and examines issues ranging from the importance of speaking with one voice (Pedersen, Behrens and Enhofer, 2008) to who is leading EU energy policy (Maltby, 2013). Other publications focus on how much progress has been made towards the creation of a common energy security policy

in the EU (Eikeland, 2011; Youngs 2011), what obstacles stand in the way to developing a common European energy approach (Méritet, 2011; Duffield and Westphal, 2011), and what events explain the recent progress made in that direction (Proedrou, 2012). However, after reviewing the literature, one can conclude that when talking about a 'common European energy security policy' most authors refer to a common energy security action plan. The difficulty of defining a term, even one that is so commonly used in official EU documents, is that the meaning continually changes to reflect the needs of a particular time.

The academic interest in EU energy policy and, more specifically in EU-Russian energy relations revived following the 2006 Russia-Ukraine energy crisis, resulting in a plethora of academic books, articles and research papers (Baran, 2007; Cohen, 2007; Casier, 2011; Youngs, 2009; Goldthau, 2008; Smith, 2010; Siddi 2017). The academic literature can be divided into two groups. The first group adopts the geopolitical approach and considers energy as a strategic and security factor (Paillard, 2010; Smith, 2010; Baran, 2007). The second views energy as an internationally traded commodity and perceives EU-Russian energy relations primarily as economic and commercial (Casier, 2011; Goldthau, 2008; Judge, Maltby and Sharples, 2016).

1.1.1 The Geopolitical Approach

At the end of the Cold War, liberal theories of International Relations, which stressed EU-Russian energy interdependence, were employed as the optimal analytical framework in terms of explanatory power for the study of EU-Russian energy relations. However, ever since the gas conflicts between Moscow and Kyiv in 2006, the academic debate on EU-Russia energy relations has been increasingly securitised. Furthermore, the 2009 Russia-Ukraine gas crisis and the annexation of Crimea in 2014 further strengthened arguments that Russia uses energy

as a political tool (Siddi, 2017a). Thus, geopolitical and realist arguments gained popularity among scholars and energy experts.

Scholars that adopt a realist/geopolitical approach to EU-Russian energy relations view energy resources as a source of power and political influence that can be used to gain political supremacy in the international arena (Pascual and Zambetakis, 2010). Due to the scarcity of fossil resources and their unequal distribution, energy politics is largely viewed as a zero-sum game among competing actors that seek to gain control over energy resources (Klare, 2009; Siddi 2017a). Once states have secured control, they can use them as leverage to strengthen their influence over their resource-poor neighbours (Pascual and Zambetakis, 2010).

According to Mannes and Valeriano, the use of a coercive foreign policy enables Russia to get other states to do something that they otherwise would not do (2015). Newnham (2011) and Busygina (2017) highlight that Russia has used energy to either reward friendly states or punish unfriendly states in the past. Russia-friendly regimes, for example, have received debt pardons and gas at significantly discounted prices (Korteweg, 2018; Manuela and Ribeiro, 2018). In contrast, non-friendly regimes faced significant price rises and energy embargoes (Wolczuk, 2016).

In this context, the EU's dependence on natural resources, and in particular natural gas, is seen as a source of weakness (Dannreuther, 2016; Siddi, 2017a). Many western authors, for example, have expressed the view that Europe's increasing reliance on Russian supplies is a threat to the EU's security (e.g., Baran, 2007; Cohen, 2009b; Larsson, 2007; Mankoff, 2012; Smith, 2010). These authors argue that the more Europe relies on Russian gas, the less they will be willing to confront Russia over foreign policy issues (ibid), thus allowing Russia to get away with its aggressive foreign policy. Consequently, the EU's energy dependence on Russia is seen as a security issue because it increases the Union's vulnerability to Russian pressure or threats.

However, the geopolitical approach has been challenged as one-sided and reductionist by another group of researchers (Judge et al., 2016; Casier, 2013; Goldthau, 2008). Judge et al. (2016, 754-755) identify at least three forms of geopolitical reductionism in the analyses of EU-Russian energy relations: 'the reduction of EU-Russian energy relations to the diktats of power politics', 'the reduction of EU-Russian energy relations to the objectives of, and interaction between, specific governmental actors', and 'the interpretation of EU-Russian energy relations through a narrow geopolitical reading of energy security'.

In the first case, energy relations are understood as a zero-sum game between the EU (having adopted a market-oriented approach to energy policy) and Russia (having taken a geopolitical approach), which means that Moscow tends to use energy resources as a tool for exerting influence on the international system. According to Klinke (2012, cited in Judge et al., 2016), this type of reductionism is common in both the media and academic publications, which often find that Russia's approach is faulty and therefore suggest that it should adopt Europe's liberal value system. According to Casier (2013, cited in Judge et al., 2016), the problem with this logic is that it overemphasises the political and overlooks the complex domestic, commercial and technical dynamics of the energy sector, which in turn results in a fundamental misunderstanding of EU-Russian energy relations. Additionally, ignoring the fact that the EU-Russian energy partnership has always been based on a combination of geopolitical bargaining and doing business as usual, even during the Cold War, significantly reduces the likelihood of meaningful EU-Russian energy cooperation in future (Judge et al., 2016).

Here, it is important to clarify that Judge shares Romanova's (2016) view that Moscow's energy policy towards the EU stems from the geopolitical paradigm. This, however, does not mean that Russia energy policy is not based on commercial logic. Such a fact would imply that Russian gas pipelines do not make sense from the financial point of view and that the billions invested in the expansion of energy infrastructure to Europe are spent solely for

political reasons. This, in turn, would lead to a negative contribution of the energy sector to the Russian economy. The problem with this logic is that all available evidence shows that Russian energy sector investments work for the benefit of the Russian economy, which in turn shows that the country's energy policy makes sense commercially. This demonstrates that the current and future potential for more cooperative relations between the EU and Russia depends not 'on the examination of the interaction of non-governmental actors' as Judge et al. (2016, 755) argue, but rather on enhancing a better understanding of the forces that portray Russian energy policy towards the EU, as mainly being geopolitical.

In the second case, EU-Russian energy relations are reduced to the interests of, and interaction between, governments (ibid). The study suggests that other important actors are often excluded from analyses, or their interests and actions are interpreted to be closely aligned with the Kremlin. The case of Gazprom is presented by Judge et al. as the most common example of this form of reductionism. The authors argue that the company is often seen as a tool of the Russian government, with no commercial interests of its own, and find that this logic is highly problematic (Judge et al., 2016). This is because 'in all areas of the energy sector there is a wide range of actors with their own political and economic interests, motivations and cognitive frames which may deviate from or indeed challenge the interests of the incumbent government actors' (ibid, 755). This view is supported by Tepavcevic's (2015) analysis of cooperation between Russian state institutions and state-owned energy companies. His findings show that 'despite usually being portrayed as channels for Russian political influence', the drivers for the Outward Foreign Direct Investments 'of Russian state-owned energy companies represent a complex range of commercial considerations' (ibid, 29). The study also reveals that 'Russian state-owned energy companies only initiate cooperation with state institutions when the circumstances require certain financial and diplomatic support to conduct OFDI' (ibid).

Interestingly, while several scholars challenge the logic of reducing EU-Russian energy relations to the interests of, and interaction between, governmental actors (Goldthau, 2008; Tepavcevic, 2015), a closer look into the Energy Strategy of Russia for the period up to 2020 (ES-2020), and the Energy Strategy of Russia for the period up to 2030 (ES-2030), reveals that the wider goals of the Russian gas sector are set by the Russian state. These are in line with Russia's wider foreign policy goals. More specifically, ES-2020 and ES-2030 contain information not only about the expansion of energy infrastructures to Europe but also about the state's role in the development and realisation of various energy projects, clearly pointing to a top-down system of decision-making. One also has to remember that Gazprom is a state-owned company, and the Chairman and CEO are nominated by the government, which in turn increases state control over the company. With this in mind, there is actually little room for denying that Gazprom interests and actions are closely aligned with the interests of the Kremlin and that the role of non-state actors in the Russian energy sector is overstated. This perhaps explains why many authors tend to align commercial interest to state interests and focus their analyses, exclusively or predominantly, on interactions between governmental actors.

The third form, according to Judge et al. (2016), is the reduction of energy to strategic and security factors, which in turn leads to the interpretation of the EU-Russian energy partnership as a competitive process. This source suggests that the geopolitical reading of energy security is problematic. This is because 'energy security cannot be reduced to a single objective or set of policy prescriptions' as the meaning of the term is contested (ibid, 755). Whilst they do not claim that 'the concept of energy security has been fundamentally misunderstood or that it is ultimately meaningless within EU-Russian relations', they argue that it is 'given meaning by the ways in which it is used and understood by different actors in particular contexts' (ibid). Moreover, the authors argue that the tendency of certain authors to reduce energy security to the security of EU gas supplies or at least to focus primarily on this

perspective, is problematic, as 'it neglects the security of demand for Russian gas, which is a major driving force in… energy policy' (ibid). This logic also implies that each actor has a fixed set of security concerns that can be revealed by investigating the rates of energy production, energy consumption and import dependence. Yet, in reality, energy security is constantly reassessed by each side in the context of a continuously changing environment (ibid).

According to the authors:

> Energy security consists of ideological as well as material dimensions. By failing to examine the dynamics of how energy security is articulated and given meaning in different contexts, a reductionist interpretation of the concept struggles to fully understand the historical evolution of this relationship. Understanding this temporal dimension is essential with regards to conceptions of energy security. The possibilities for complementarity and cooperation between the EU and Russia in the future are also foreclosed (Judge et al., 2016, 755).

With regard to the third form of reductionism, Judge et al. argue that energy security ideally should not be reduced to a single objective or set of policy prescriptions; however, they suggest that it is inescapable that this happens in some cases. For example, when studying EU energy security, it is impossible not to focus on the security of EU gas supplies, as the term itself regained popularity in Europe after the 2006 gas crisis. All subsequent EU efforts (First Energy Package, Second Energy Package, Third Energy Package, Energy Union) were predominantly focused on ensuring gas security. Also, considering the fact that natural gas demand is expected to increase in most European countries in the near future (IEA, 2018), more likely than not, the security of gas supplies will remain at the heart of European energy security policy.

However, Judge et al. (2016) agree that an objective, academic examination of EU-Russian energy relations would require equal attention to be paid to the security of demand for Russian natural gas. Failure to do so would result in an inadequate understanding of the dynamics of EU-Russian energy relations, which in turn could have a detrimental effect on establishing meaningful cooperation between the two in the future.

1.1.2 Explaining Geopolitical Reductionism

While some authors have criticised the different types of reductionism in the analyses of EU-Russian energy relations (Judge et al., 2016), others have sought to explain why geopolitical reductionism is such a common phenomenon in the academic literature on the EU-Russian energy partnership. Casier (2016, 769), for example, argues that the literature 'reflects a widespread tendency to analyse EU-Russian energy relations in terms of high politics and/or security, in which actors determine their strategies in function of their geostrategic interests'. He finds that the keyword in the publications is dependence and suggests that the asymmetrical energy interdependence between the EU and Russia raises concerns about shifting power relations or threats to survival (ibid). Although the author does not deny that the energy interdependence between the EU and Russia is asymmetrical, he suggests that 'reducing energy relations and the motivations underlying energy policies to this dependence is one-sided' (ibid, 769). Furthermore, he suggests that considering the fact that the energy field is largely affected by the broader political relations between Brussels and Moscow, the geopolitical understanding of EU-Russian relations has unavoidably affected our understanding of the EU-Russian energy partnership (Casier, 2016).

Dannreuther (2016), on the other hand, attributes the tendency towards a geopolitical framing of EU-Russia energy relations to global trends and regional developments. On a global level, the rise in oil prices, the rising demand for energy resources, and in particular, the rise in demand for energy in Asia, shifted power from energy-importing states to energy-producing states, and led to the strengthening of the state's control and influence in a significant number of energy producers (ibid). He suggests that the major energy-producing states, such as Russia, saw this increase in demand as an opportunity to promote their political interests in addition to their economic interests. In contrast, the new major consumers such as China, which were

inclined to adopt a more neo-mercantilist and geopolitical approach to energy security, saw their energy security interests better served by national energy champions rather than private international energy companies, as would be the case in the West (Dannreuther, 2016).

On the regional level, developments such as the expansion of NATO eastwards and the EU enlargement in 2004 raised tension between the West and Russia. This, according to Dannreuther, had a fundamental impact on EU-Russian relations, which in turn were translated into increasing anxiety over energy security.

The author (2016) also highlights that, whereas during the 1990s, energy inter-dependence between the EU and Russia was seen as a major driver and a catalyst for Russia's convergence with Western values, by the late 2000s, following the gas disputes between Russia and Ukraine, Russian policies were increasingly seen to be hostile to EU values. In this context, 'the energy inter-dependence became viewed as a serious source of European vulnerability through which Russia could assert its interests and influence and weaken European solidarity, particularly among CEE states' (ibid, 915).

Interestingly, however, scholars disagree about whether Europe's dependence on Russian energy provides Russia with leverage over them. Casier (2011), for example, contrary to Smith (2010) and Baran (2007), argues that the EU's energy dependence on Russia has been exaggerated. He notes that Europe's energy cooperation with Russia dates back to the Soviet era and stresses that, during that time, European states proportionally imported larger volumes of Russian natural gas than they do today (Casier, 2011). As a result of this observation, he raises two important questions: 'Why are policymakers so concerned about dependence on Russia today when they did not have similar concerns in the last days of the Cold War? And what explains this shift in the understanding of EU-Russian energy relations if not the increased dependence on imports from Russia?' (Casier, 2011, 493).

In an effort to answer these questions, Casier notes that most scholars and experts looking at EU-Russian energy relations take as a focal point Russia's share in the EU's natural gas imports, which most scholars estimate to be about 40 per cent. However, Russia's share in individual member states' gas imports differs significantly. Some countries are not dependent on Russian gas at all (Denmark, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden), while some other states (Bulgaria, Romania, Slovakia, the Baltic States and Finland) import all their natural gas from Russia. Thus, while one can argue that the latter are 'highly sensitive and also considerably vulnerable', that point cannot be easily made for the EU as a whole (ibid, 499).

Overall, Russia's share in the EU's gas imports declined to 31.5 per cent in 2008 from 40.4 per cent in 2000 and 55.3 per cent in 1990. Thus, according to Casier, the EU's dependence on Russian gas was drastically higher in the late Soviet years than in 2008 (ibid). However, while the Russian share in EU gas imports has declined, volumes have remained relatively stable in absolute terms (ibid).

To shed further light on natural gas supply statistics, Casier explains that Russia's 31 per cent share of EU gas imports (as of 2008) does not mean that 31 per cent of the consumed gas in the EU is imported from Russia (ibid, 499). Some countries, such as the UK and Netherlands, produce their own gas. In 2008, the EU produced 40 per cent of the gas consumed, which means that Russia's share in the EU's total gas consumption is around 25 per cent. The same logic applies to some individual member states, such as Romania, which is often presented as being 100 per cent reliant on Russian gas. Thus, in 2009 Romania produced 10.6 bcm of its own gas, which was five times more than it imported from Russia (2.15 bcm). This means that despite the fact that all its imported gas comes from Russia, its dependence on Russia is, in fact, not very significant (Casier, 2011).

In fact, according to Casier, the supply vulnerability of the EU depends on whether we measure it in terms of Russia's share in EU gas imports, Russian share in EU total gas

consumption, or Russian share of EU primary energy consumption. When measured in terms of Russia's share in gas imports, the supply vulnerability of the EU appears fairly high, around 31.5 per cent (as of 2008) (Casier, 2011). When measured as its share in the total gas consumption, it is significantly lower, around 25 per cent, and finally, when measured in terms of its share in the EU's primary energy consumption, the supply vulnerability is only around 6.8 per cent (ibid).

Russian Share	1990	2000	2008
Russian share in EU gas imports	55.3%	40.4%	31.5%
Russian share in EU total gas consumption	30.6%	24.8%	24.9%
Russian share in EU primary energy consumption	6.0%	6.3%	6.8%

Table 3 Russian share in EU-27 natural gas imports, natural gas consumption and primary energy consumption

Source: Casier, 2011.

Considering the fact that the supply vulnerability has been relatively stable since 1990 and the fact that only gas creates dependency issues due to its method of transportation, Casier concludes that the EU's actual supply dependence on Russian gas has been overrated (ibid).

However, other scholars argue that the EU's sensitivity and vulnerability towards Russia have increased significantly in recent years (Esakova, 2012, 175). At the same time, the degree of Moscow's sensitive interdependence on the EU has decreased due to several factors, including the creation of a Russian stabilisation fund and long-term contracts with EU member states (Esakova, 2012).

Overall, Casier's analysis and interpretation of the dependency is perhaps his most significant contribution to the literature. Contrary to many other academic publications, his

work discusses how various data can be interpreted and, most importantly, demonstrates that the EU's energy dependence on Russian natural gas is often exaggerated.

Having excluded the possibility that energy came to be perceived as a geopolitical issue due to the EU's supply dependence on Russia, Casier points out several other factors that may have had an impact on how the geopolitical power-related explanation became dominant in the study of EU-Russian energy relations. These could be increased consumption due to booming economies (China and India), rising energy prices which strengthened the Russian economy, and the EU enlargements in 2004 and 2007. The latter increased the EU's energy dependence on Russia and, at the same time, led to the deterioration of relations between Brussels and Moscow. This is because the new member states sought a tougher EU stance towards Russia mainly due to their Soviet past. As Casier correctly points out, contrary to expectations, 'there is no positive correlation between energy dependence on Russia and the willingness to engage pragmatically with Russia' (2011, 503).

Even though these factors had a significant impact on the shift in our perception of EU-Russian energy relations, Casier suggests that there are perhaps even more fundamental reasons. He singles out three factors and suggests that a Constructivist perspective would 'help us to understand the discrepancy between the enormous rise in the '"social" understanding of energy dependency and the actual change in "material" energy dependence' (2011, 503).

The first factor is the gradual return to the geopolitical logic of the 1990s. Casier correctly points out that the construction of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline by the Clinton Administration, which links the Caspian basin with the Mediterranean, is a milestone in the return of energy geopolitics. The Clinton Administration aimed to build a pipeline that would transfer oil to the West, bypassing Russia and Iran and preventing them from obtaining control over the energy resources of the Caspian Sea. While this logic was not new, in the mid-90s, energy availability and affordability were not worrying issues. In that context, Casier

argues that material factors cannot explain the geopolitical framing of energy. What can explain it is the 'logic of appropriateness resistant to change' (ibid, 504). In other words, the standard of behaviour towards Russia, driven by images that Russia was still a threat to the West despite the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

The author identifies Russia's economic growth and assertive foreign policy after 2000 as the second factor that led to a change of perceptions and affected EU-Russian relations. Russia's refusal to accept the EU's neoliberal approach to the energy market, and Putin's efforts to reinstate state control in the energy sector, resulted in Moscow's failure to ratify the Energy Charter.

This leads us to Casier's third factor, the clash of paradigms, which explains why energy is often a source of conflict between the EU and Russia. According to the author, a 'clash of the neoliberal paradigm of the EU and the state-interventionist paradigm of Russia' may, in fact, not be 'a matter of ideological preferences' or 'a clash between a norm-based and an interest-based approach'(Casier, 2011, 505). It is most probably a 'result of diverging economic interests', arising from the significantly different markets (ibid). Casier suggests that the EU's goal as a consumer is to create a competitive market where the competition between suppliers will lower energy prices, whereas Russia's aim is to maintain strategic control over the energy market through long-term contracts and special deals. Thus, he argues that at the heart of the EU-Russian energy conflict are diverging economic and not political interests (ibid).

In fact, he argues that all countries involved in this 'conflict', Russia, the EU member states, and transit states, 'have primordially commercial interests and most concerns and conflicts can be explained from this perspective' (ibid). Although there is no doubt that Casier's contribution to the relevant literature is significant, this statement is problematic, especially when it comes to Central and Eastern Europe.

For example, it is hard to argue that clashing economic interests are at the heart of the energy conflict between Russia and Central and Eastern Europe (New Europe) when high officials from these countries have publicly claimed numerous times that increased energy dependence on Russia is a threat to their national independence. Without a doubt, energy relations with Russia in these countries are primarily viewed as a political and not an economic matter. Thus, since the concerns of the New Europe are security-related, one cannot dismiss the relevance of the Realist argument to the EU-Russian relations.

The other major weakness identified in Casier's analysis is the exclusion of the impact of the American factor on the geopolitical framing of the EU-Russian energy relations, despite evidence demonstrating the opposite. For example, Casier acknowledges that the US Administrations expressed concerns over the dependence of their NATO allies on Soviet gas in the past. He also refers to the sanctions that Washington imposed on the export of energy-related technology to Moscow in order to prevent the construction of Soviet pipelines to Europe. However, he does not consider the US interests as a factor that could potentially explain the geopolitical framing of EU-Russian energy relations.

The exemption of the US factor from the analysis of the EU-Russian energy relations is highly problematic. This is because primary sources such as declassified central intelligence documents show that Washington has been closely monitoring the European-Russian energy partnership since the 1950s. If one considers the numerous visits of high US officials to Gazprom's European partners, aiming to convince their governments to abandon joint EU-Russian energy projects, it becomes clear that US interference has never ceased; not even after the collapse of the Soviet Union. In fact, as this thesis will demonstrate, these efforts were intensified as US-Russian competition increased.

However, this omission is repeated in many studies that deal with either the EU Energy Security or the EU-Russian energy relations. Neither Marín-Quemada, García-Verdugo and

Escribano (2012), who have provided an interesting study of the EU energy security policy and objectives, nor Proedrou (2012), who looks into the major implications of EU energy security policy in the gas sector, have discussed the impact of the US factor on the EU's energy partnership with Russia, and its role in influencing the EU's energy security policy. Youngs (2009), who studies the internal and external dimension of European energy security and identifies the paradoxes and contradictions of European energy policy, has also left American interests out of the picture.

Even when scholars (Casier, 2011; Dannreuther, 2016; Siddi, 2017a) acknowledge that the Russian-Western competition for influence in the post-Soviet space had repercussions on EU-Russian energy relations, their analyses are limited to describing the developments as a 'spill-over' of this competition into energy relations without any further investigations of the phenomenon.

Overall, the literature on EU energy security policy and EU-Russian energy relations has largely under-investigated the impact of the American factor on the EU-Russian energy relation and the development of a common European energy security policy (gas policy). In order to clarify whether the impact of Great Power competition on the development of a common European energy security policy has been previously addressed (possible research gap), the second part of this chapter investigates the literature on US-Russia relations, aiming to identify any studies that have examined the impact of Great Power competition on European energy politics.

1.2 The Great Power Competition Literature

Political scientists have often referred to great powers in their works without providing a clear definition of the term. This is because they hold the view that the power of states cannot be

reliably measured; however, they suggest that there is consensus about who the great powers are at any given time. For example, Waltz's suggests in his writings that 'one finds general agreement about who the great powers of a period are, with occasional doubt about marginal cases'. He argues that the question is 'an empirical one, and common sense can answer it (Waltz 1979, 131).

However, other scholars disagree with the idea that common sense can answer this question since the term has no fixed meaning (Wagner, 2009, 20). In fact, Wagner (2009) suggests that one needs a definition of the term to make a valid argument about great powers.

In the literature, there is no standard definition for the term great power, but Buzan notes that in the classical writings on great powers, there are two threads in the attempts to develop criteria that can be used to distinguish great powers from the other states in the international system (Buzan, 2004, 59). These are the material capabilities and the social role (ibid).

Buzan finds that Waltz's definition is the most representative of the hard realist tradition, which he describes as 'almost (but interestingly not quite) totally materialist in approach' (ibid, 59). Indeed, in his writings, Waltz suggests that what distinguishes great powers from other states in the system is their material capabilities. This is evident when he states that in 'international politics, as in any self-help system, the units of greatest capability set the scene for action for others as well as themselves' (Waltz, 1979, 72). Waltz is not interested in sectoring or separately weighting the economic, military and other capabilities of states as he argues that states

> are not placed in the top rank because they excel in one way or another. Their rank depends on how they score on all of the following items: size of the population and territory, resource endowment, economic capability, military strength, political stability and competence (ibid, 131).

Buzan notes that Waltz's definition treats power as 'an all-around characteristic with multiple determinants' (Buzan, 2004, 60). The problem with Waltz's definition, according to the author, is that Waltz does not clarify how 'the different material elements are to be weighted against each other' (ibid).

Other scholars' definitions, while have 'materialist benchmarks', also emphasize the social role of the great powers. For example, Bull argues that in addition to having significant military capabilities, great powers must also be recognised by other actors in the system to have 'special rights and duties' and 'accept this role and duties' (Buzan, 2004, 60-61). These include playing a 'part in determining issues that affect the peace and security of the international system as a whole' (ibid, 61). While Bull's definition emphasises the importance of great power status (how other states but also the concerned state see itself in the international system), the author does not clarify which one should be given more weight or who are the other states who 'confer recognition'. (Buzan, 2004, 61).

There are many more definitions of the term in the literature that help to determine which states should be classed as great powers. This study posits that these definitions are more useful for studies that are interested in ranking states or that involve states that could be characterised as marginal cases. There is little value in developing criteria by which to distinguish great powers from other states in the international system in this research project. This is because this study is not interested in ranking states while the two great powers under investigation (the US and Russia) in this project are not marginal cases. Whichever definition one uses, there is a broad agreement in the literature that the US should be classed as a great power.

When it comes to Russia, this study posits that while there was no consensus on whether Russia was a great power in the 1999s and early 2000s, it is difficult to disagree that from 2014 and until today (2021), Russia should be classed as a great power. One that has abundant natural

resources, the material capabilities (nuclear arms and sophisticated military technology) to defend its interests abroad and bear the consequences. Besides the material criteria, Russia also meets the 'social role' criteria. Both Russian citizens and politicians see their country as a great power with interests that stretch around the world, one that the other actors in the international system have to consult on all issues of international importance. When it comes to the recognition of Russia's great power status, Joe Biden, the US President, admitted in a recent statement that Russia is a great power (Biden, 2021). This last point on how the US views Russia is of great significance for this study, as it posits that what is important is not whether Russia is a great power or not but how the United States policymakers see Russia.

Great Power Competition

In his major work, The Tragedy of Great Power Politics, Mearsheimer attempts to explain the behaviour of great powers in the international system. The author suggests that in an anarchic international system with no overarching authority to enforce rules, 'great powers fear each other and always compete with each other for power' but 'the intensity of competition varies' (Mearsheimer, 2003, 2). Mazarr has identified more than one objective of interstate competition. These are 'power and security, status, standing and prestige, material and economic prosperity, resources, territory and sovereign claims, values and ideology and rules, norms and institutions of the system' (Mazarr, 2018, 22).

According to Lacey, rarely 'do strategic competitions during eras of major state power shifts end without at least one direct major military clash' (Lacey, 2016). However, Lynch III notes that during times of relative power transition, the direct military clash among Great Powers is not completely unavoidable (Lynch, 2020). As neorealists suggest, the structure of the international system, which forces great powers to compete, can also mitigate great power

competition, settling great power competition into other nonviolent patterns of rivalry (politico-diplomatic, economic, ideological, or informational), thus avoiding war (ibid).

This study will demonstrate that the competition between Washington and Moscow both during the Cold War but also in the post-Cold War era was over position, influence in the international system and territory. Chapter Four and subsequent chapters will show that in the post-Cold War era, the US put significant efforts to prevent Russia from regaining its power and influence abroad, whereas Russia was primarily concerned with restoring its position in the international system.

Energy exports have played a critical role in Moscow's efforts to restore its great power status. Increased oil and gas exports led to Russia's economic recovery, which in turn allowed the modernisation of the Russian military and a more aggressive Russian behaviour in the international system. Therefore, the US efforts to stop Russia's energy exports abroad were not surprising but expected. The next section will discuss the US-Russian clash over energy exports to Europe.

Energy as a source of Russian Power

Soviet oil exports to Western Europe grew rapidly in the early 1950s. This raised concerns in the US over Moscow's growing influence over European affairs (Perović, 2017; Stent, 2014). In response to the Soviet 'oil offensive', the US delegation to NATO pushed for the imposition of an embargo on the sales of large-diameter pipe technology to the Soviet Union (Perović, 2017). The embargo was imposed in 1962 but lifted in 1966, thus allowing Moscow to increase its oil and gas exports to Europe (ibid).

In the late 1970s, however, coal and oil production in the Soviet Union began to stagnate, and this continued into the 1980s (Hewett, 2015). In contrast, the natural gas sector performed well. In exchange for western technology and credits, Soviet gas was shipped to

Europe (from West Siberia to Germany) via a new gas pipeline, thus marking an era of 'a historically unprecedented expansion of energy relations and laying the foundations for the Soviet Union's rise to becoming Europe's key energy supplier' (Perović, 2017, 2).

Contrary to oil, natural gas can be transported only via pipelines, and unless billions of dollars are invested in alternative methods of transportation, the dependence on a single supply source poses serious security issues for the importers. In the 1980s, President Ronald Reagan recognised the implications of such dependence on the national interests of the United States (Goldman, 2008).

Fearing that if the US European allies became dependent on Soviet gas, they would become vulnerable to Moscow's political pressure, Reagan opposed the construction of the Soviet Yamal gas pipeline in the early 1980s (Graebner, Burns and Siracusa, 2008). His concern was that the pipeline would enhance Moscow's power and influence over European states at the expense of Western security and provide 'the Kremlin with a stronghold over western Europe's energy supplies' (ibid, 29). The Kremlin could then exploit this advantage by threatening European governments with either higher natural gas prices or by cutting off supplies (ibid).

However, the growing Soviet influence in Europe was not the only concern of the Reagan Administration. Graebner, Burns and Siracusa (2008) correctly point out that Washington was worried that the $8 billion annual earnings from gas exports would allow Moscow to support high-level military spending. The realisation in Washington that oil and gas exports were fuelling the Soviet Union's power and influence led to the adoption of several measures that aimed to restrict its energy exports.

One of these measures included William Casey's appointment as the head of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) in 1981. According to Gates (2006), Casey joined the CIA primarily to wage war against the Soviet Union. The new CIA director believed that the best way to

weaken the Soviet Union was to ‘paralyse’ its energy sector (Goldman, 2008). According to Goldman (ibid, 50), Peter Schweizer, President of the Government Accountability Institute, and Yegor Gaidar, Acting Prime Minister of Russia under Boris Yeltsin, advanced the view that Casey sought to paralyse the ‘Soviet petroleum industry’s export-earning capabilities to prevent it from generating the hard currency Russia so desperately needed to pay for its food and technology imports’.

The author suggests that Casey was well aware of the fact that the Soviet Union needed the income from petroleum and gas exports to pay not only for imports of goods like grain from the West but also to pay for technology that the Soviet Union could not produce itself (Goldman, 2008). These imports, as Goldman notes, were of great importance for the Soviet military-industrial complex (in Russian, Oboronnyi Promyshlenniy Kompleks - OPK), which was described by the US Department of Defense (ibid, 32) as ‘the world’s largest military-industrial complex’. At the same time, the OPK was also one of the highest priorities in the Soviet economy and significant economic resources were diverted towards this sector. For example, military expenditures in the 1980s accounted for 15 to 20 per cent of GDP (Bradshaw and Connolly, 2016; Sakwa, 2013).

In an effort to deal with the Soviet military threat, the CIA Soviet strategy was to shrink the value of oil and gas exports and thereby weaken the Soviet economy, which in turn would force the Soviet Union to restrict investment in its defence industry and withdraw from costly military operations around the world (Goldman, 2008).

In this context, one of the strategies employed by Washington was to prevent European states from helping Moscow to build natural gas export pipelines. For example, the US placed significant efforts in blocking the construction of the Siberian pipeline to prevent Moscow from reviving its weakening economy. Following the declaration of martial law in Poland in December 1981, the Reagan Administration seized the opportunity to impose an embargo on

the sale of steel pipes to the Soviet Union, hoping that the declaration of martial law in Poland would lead to a shift in the attitudes of the Europeans towards the construction of the pipeline (Domber, 2014). However, during the visit of a special US mission to Europe under the leadership of the Undersecretary for Security Assistance, James L. Backley, it quickly became clear that the Europeans did not share Washington's fears and were against the imposition of sanctions (Perović, 2017; Graebner, Burns and Siracusa, 2008).

Perović (2017) notes that, despite the objections of his European Allies, Reagan informed the Europeans in June 1982 that Washington would impose sanctions not only on the US but also on European firms. However, the European governments replied that they would honour their agreements. Convinced that Washington's policy was nable ot only fruitless but could seriously endanger US-European relations, Reagan lifted the sanctions in late 1982.

Although the US sanctions against the construction of the Soviet-EU gas pipeline had little success, the Reagan Administration was convinced that targeting Moscow's main source of income, namely the energy sector, was the best strategy for weakening the economic and military potential of the Soviet Union.

In that context, the US tried to approach and convince the Saudi leadership to increase its production and export of oil. This was expected to lead to a drop in oil prices around the world, thus causing severe damage to the Soviet economy (Goldman, 2008). At the same time, it would also allow the US to import cheap oil, thus assisting its economy. As a result of this strategy, in 1986, the average price of oil fell to half of that in 1985 ($25.60/ barrel) and dropped even further by 1988. These measures cost Moscow $20 billion a year (ibid).

The drop in oil prices not only resulted in a significant decline in hard currency earnings, but it also forced Moscow to restrict the level of technological imports to sustain its oil production, which eventually led to a reduction of output. By 1990, oil output fell by 10 per cent leading to a new cycle of falling revenues and a further reduction of imports (Goldman,

2008). This had a significant impact on Moscow's military expenditures, which plunged from $246 billion in 1988 to just $14 billion in 1994.

Overall, although scholars disagree considerably on why the Soviet Union collapsed (Sakwa, 2013), there is little doubt that the Reagan Administration's 1980s efforts to paralyse the Soviet economy contributed to it. In fact, some scholars go as far as to suggest that Casey's systematic strategy of identifying and targeting Soviet vulnerabilities accelerated the breakup of the Soviet empire (Bush, 1997; Schweizer, 1994).

By the 2000s, however, rising energy prices and increased demand for energy in China and India led to the Russian economy's recovery. The new Russian President, Vladimir Putin, was convinced that the only way to recover from the crisis and restore Russia's former might was by taking over control of its resource-based companies (Stent, 2014; Sakwa, 2008; Goldman, 2008). The growth of the economy, in turn, allowed for the revival of the country's military-industrial complex (Bradshaw and Conolly, 2016). The infusion of energy revenues into the defence industry has allowed Russia to equip its armed forces with modern equipment, modernise the industrial defence base, and ensure the future development and production of modern weapon systems (ibid). Most importantly, alongside the booming energy sector, a boosted OPK has allowed Moscow to pursue a more assertive posture in international relations (ibid).

Light (2014) also sees Russia's energy sector as a source of Russia's power and inclines towards the view that it was Russia's vast energy resources combined with high oil and gas prices that encouraged the Kremlin's new assertiveness in foreign policy. Sakwa also suggests that besides things such as 'political stabilisation and a growing alienation, Russia's assertive behaviour can also be attributed to increased energy revenues' (2017, 128). Other prominent scholars such as Allison (2013), De Hass (2011), Gvosdev and Marsh (2013), Leichtova (2014), Newnham (2011), Sherr (2013) and Tsygankov (2012), have all argued that energy

resources, along with military capabilities, have been the key sources of Russia's increasingly assertive foreign policy.

However, it is important to mention that some authors argue that Russia's new conditions and worldview are not the only explanatory factors for Moscow's shift towards assertiveness. Gvosdev and Marsh (2013), Leichtova (2014), Sakwa (2017), and Tsygankov (2010) suggest that Russia's growing domestic strength in combination with security challenges such as NATO's expansion closer to the country's borders and destabilisation of the Middle East have encouraged the Kremlin's increasingly assertive foreign policy.

Overall, it can be argued that Russia's vast energy resources allowed the country's economic recovery in the post-Cold War era and the modernisation of its military forces. This, in turn, allowed Russia to regain its confidence in the international system. As a result, the country's elite became less reticent about standing up for what it believes to be Russia's national interests (Mankoff, 2012).

In general, developments in the post-Cold War era indicate that the US and Russia could not disconnect themselves from their past and from their geopolitical instincts as great powers. Despite the fact that there was evidence of US-Russian cooperation in the post-Cold War era, it soon became clear that the US-Russian partnership (see Chapter Five) could not survive the growing number of security conflicts that emerged (Tsygankov, 2012).

In general, the partnership among the two nations was mainly based on the security agenda and on issues of counter-terrorism (ibid). However, according to Tsygankov, the US was unwilling to support its initial commitment to the development of its partnership with Russia. Thus, US-Russian relations started to worsen in 2003 over the war in Chechnya and the change in America's approach towards the Russian political system (ibid). Conflicting strategic visions on several issues scuttled any attempts to improve US-Russian relations (ibid).

Tsygankov (2012) lists several reasons for the deterioration in US-Russian relations. The most important of these was the US withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (2002), NATO's expansion towards Russia's borders (in 1999 and 2004), and US plans to deploy missile defence systems, also known as the European Interceptor Site (EIS), in Poland and the Czech Republic. Although negotiations were launched in 2007, political developments derailed the process, and EIS was cancelled in 2009 and replaced with a phased plan - the Aegis Ballistic Missile Defense System. In response to these developments, Putin announced a moratorium on the implementation of the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe (Tsygankov, 2012).

The military, however, according to Tsygankov, was not the only issue generating anxiety in the government of the United States. Washington was also concerned over the increased state control of the Russian energy sector and Moscow's use of energy to blackmail its energy-dependent neighbours (ibid). These in combination with Russia's efforts to diversify its export routes to expand its energy market, the rising energy prices, attempts to control the transportation network in the post-Soviet region and strengthening coordination of energy activities with other key producers, were perceived as an attempt by Moscow to reinforce its control over the former Soviet region (Tsygankov, 2012).

US concerns were further intensified when Russia cut off natural gas supplies to Ukraine in 2006 and 2009, and when Putin signed agreements with Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in 2007 to secure the export of these countries' oil via Russian pipelines.

Washington's anxiety became particularly evident following the Russia-Ukraine energy crisis in 2006 (Stent, 2014), when several US officials, including the Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice and Vice President Dick Cheney, criticised Russia for using its energy supplies as political leverage. Clearly, the increased dependence of the US's European Allies

on Russian energy resources raised concerns in Washington, similar to those expressed during the Cold War era.

According to Stent (2014), Washington's main worry was that the increased dependence on Russian gas would affect political decision-making in Europe and prevent European states from adopting firmer policies towards Moscow when necessary. She also rightly points out that the 'debate - including some of the rhetoric emanating from the US Congress – was reminiscent of that during the Cold War' (Stent, 2014, 196).

In this context, Washington adopted numerous measures that aimed to limit the energy partnership between Russia and EU member states to existing agreements, dissuade European states from participating in the construction of new Russian gas pipeline projects, and prevent long-term development exploitation of new reserves. Surprisingly, however, and despite all the available empirical evidence, the existing literature fails to investigate the impact of US-Russian competition on European energy politics.

A possible exception to this could be a recently published SWP (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik) Comment by Lohmann and Westphal (2019). In this commentary, which is titled US-Russia Policy Hits European Energy Supply, the authors draw parallels between the past and the present and conclude that the geopolitical dispute between Washington and Moscow might have a significant impact on the European energy supply and the Union's strategic autonomy.

More concretely, the paper discusses the unilateral sanctions imposed by the US on Russia in recent years and briefly discusses the consequences of these sanctions for the European nations and private economic interests in Europe. Lohmann and Westphal incline towards the assertion that these sanctions aimed to 'reduce not only Russian state revenues but also European dependence on Russian energy imports' (ibid, 1).

At the same time, however, the authors express the view that US sanctions are not exclusively based on geopolitical considerations but are also fuelled by 'Washington's vested economic interests, such as reducing the US trade deficit and creating domestic jobs' (ibid). The logic behind this policy, according to the authors, is that if European nations had to import more US Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG), 'the balance sheet would shift in Washington's favour' (ibid).

Overall, the value of this commentary lies in the fact that Lohmann and Westphal have identified the similarities between past and present US-Russia policies and have raised the argument of the impact of US-Russian competition on European gas supplies. However, the discussion on the impact of this competition on Europe's gas supplies is very limited. The authors do not investigate here the complexities of US-Russian security competition or its impact on the development of European energy policy.

Conclusion

The existing literature covers many aspects of European energy security policy and the EU's energy relationship with Russia and attempts to cover various facets of the US-Russia security competition. However, studies combining these areas have not yet been sufficiently undertaken. As a result, there is no systematic study of European Energy security policy in the context of Great Power (US-Russia) security competition.

For example, while many authors studying EU-Russian energy relations acknowledge that the Russia-West competition for influence in the post-Soviet space spilt over into EU-Russian energy relations (Casier, 2011, Dannreuther, 2016; Siddi, 2017a), there has been no further investigation of this phenomenon. Despite available empirical evidence, the impact of

the American factor on the geopolitical framing of EU-Russian energy relations and European energy politics has been largely under-investigated.

Similarly, the literature on US-Russian relations fails to investigate the impact of Great Power competition on post-Cold War era European energy politics even though evidence points at growing US involvement in the European energy sector and efforts to limit EU-Russian energy trade.

Although several publications have discussed US-Soviet 'energy wars' during the Cold War era and Washington's attempts to convince Europeans to abandon joint energy projects with the Soviet Union, surprisingly, researchers showed no interest in examining the impact of US-Russian security competition on European energy politics in the post-Cold War era.

This study aims to fill this gap in the literature by answering the following research question: To what extent has Great Power competition affected the development of a common European energy security policy?

To effectively answer this question, the next chapter will present the theoretical framework within which the above research question will be approached.

Chapter Two - Competing theoretical approaches, Neoclassical Realism and the Two-Level Model

The previous chapter demonstrated that although energy policy has only recently become a priority for EU policymakers, there are already dozens of papers looking at European energy policy and security (Judge, Maltby and Sharples, 2016; Siddi, 2017a; Casier, 2016; Esakova, 2013; Proedrou, 2012; Casier, 2011; Haukkala, 2011; Goldthau, 2008). While there have been a number of publications that focus on European energy policy, the existing studies have systematically downplayed the impact of great power competition on European energy politics. Research in this area will contribute to our understanding of the impact of great power competition on the development of the European energy security policy.

The purpose of this chapter is to present and discuss a theoretical framework within which the research question will be approached. After reviewing the main rival theories of international relations, this study posits that neoclassical realism is the optimal theoretical basis for this research project because, as the next sections will demonstrate, this theory has greater explanatory power than the main rival theories, including classical realism, structural realism, the balance of power theory, liberalism constructivism and securitisation theory. However, the study concludes that due to the complexity of the phenomena under investigation, neoclassical realism cannot be applied in its original formulation. Thus, the study presents a new variant of the Neoclassical Realist model, the Two-Level Model. The Two-Level Neoclassical Realist Model aims to enhance our understanding of the impact of US-Russia security competition on the development of the European energy security policy.

This chapter is divided into three main sections. The first section discusses the main rival theories of international relations and explains why these cannot be applied to this study; the next section presents the neoclassical realist theory, explores the different types of

neoclassical realism and explains why type III is the optimal theoretical basis for this study; section three then discusses why neoclassical realism cannot be used in its original formulation and presents and discusses a new variant of neoclassical realism that will be employed in this project to advance our knowledge on the subject. Finally, the conclusion summarises the key points of the chapter.

2.1 The main rival theories of International Relations

As has been stated above, this thesis posits that neoclassical realism constitutes the optimal theoretical basis for this research project. A brief discussion of the main alternative theories will demonstrate that neoclassical realism can provide a more nuanced explanation of states' foreign policy behaviour compared to rival theories.

Rival Theories

For example, the Innenpolitik theories stress the influence of domestic factors on states' foreign policy behaviour and downplay the influence of systemic factors. These theories suggest that internal factors such as individual or group preferences, national character, political and economic ideology determine states' foreign policy (Zakaria, 1995).

However, as Ripsman et al. (2016) correctly point out, states make foreign policy decisions exclusively or mainly based on domestic factors only in extreme cases. These are when leaders face imminent threats such as revolution or coup, or deselection in an approaching election. More often than not, states' foreign policy behaviour is shaped by both internal and international pressures, without one or the other 'dictating the course of events on their own' (Ripsman et al., 2016, 4). Therefore, Innenpolitik theories have weak explanatory power and are useful only in a small range of cases.

Similarly, systemic theories alone, such as structural realism, are insufficient and can be used only in a narrow range of cases. Structural realism was developed as a response to the liberal challenge represented by the emergence of globalisation and the acceleration of states' economic, political and security interdependence in the 1970s. It also came as an attempt to update and modify the classical realism of Hans Morgenthau with a more scientific approach.

For both neo-realist and classical realists, the state is the main actor. However, neorealists argue that the relationship between states is a result of the 'structure' of the international system and not human nature as classical realists would suggest (Donnelly, 2007). Thus, for neo-realists, security competition and inter-state war are a consequence of the anarchic international system and the unequal distribution of power in the international system.

According to theorists of this approach, the absence of a higher authority to regulate the interaction of states compels them to set security as their priority obligation. This comes from the realisation that the state needs to rely on its own power and resources in order to ensure its security. This, as neo-realists suggest, is an entirely rational mode of behaviour under conditions of anarchy.

Although structural realists agree on the assumption that the international system is composed of unitary, rational states driven by a desire for security, they do not speak with one voice on numerous other matters. One significant division within the neorealist school concerns whether states are security maximisers or power maximisers. The former position, known as defensive realism, was first outlined by Kenneth Waltz in 1979, in his book Theory of International Politics. The latter position, offensive realism, is best represented by the works of John Mearsheimer.

Both defensive and offensive realism overemphasize the influence of systemic pressure and underplay the influence of domestic environment on the foreign policy behaviour of states. While in extreme circumstances systemic pressure may dominate over domestic factors, it

alone does not determine the behaviour of states in the majority of cases. If systemic pressure alone determined states' foreign policy, then different governments would respond to systemic pressure in the same way. This is, however, not the case, leading to the conclusion that neorealism alone is insufficient to explain the phenomenon under investigation in this study.

Similarly, the Balance of Power theories are also insufficient to explain the phenomenon under investigation in this research project. This group of theories, which is a core tenet of both classical realists and neorealists, attempts to explain the establishment of alliances. According to this approach, in a world with no central authority to resort to, in a situation of threat states seek 'internal' or 'external' strengthening either by increasing their relative capabilities or joining balancing alliances (Waltz, 1979, 118). Thus, Balance of Power theories portray states as being always concerned with the distribution of power in an anarchic international system, where states are considered to be the most important actors.

However, although this approach has been an important tool for the analysis of international politics for the last three centuries, as it can explain how states respond to the dangerous concentration of power, it cannot be used for this particular study. This is because Balance of Power theories are less useful for explaining specific state foreign policy choices, such as the ones examined in this study.

A second leading approach to the study of international politics, the Liberal IR theory, which subsumes various variants of liberal theory such as democratic peace theories, commercial liberalism or liberal inter-governmentalism, is also insufficient to account for the foreign policy behaviour of states. This is because the Liberal IR theory, similarly to other Innenpolitik theories, overemphasises domestic environment and underplays the impact of the systemic pressure on states' foreign policy (Ripsman et al., 2016, 4).

More specifically, liberalism 'rests on a "bottom up" view of politics in which the demands of individuals and societal groups are treated as analytically prior to politics'

(Moravcsik, 1997, 517). For theorists of this approach, the state is not an independent actor but an institution that is 'subject to capture and recapture, construction and reconstruction' by coalitions of social actors. (ibid, 518). According to liberals, it is these social coalitions, and not systemic pressure, that define state interests and determine state foreign policy preferences.

Even the neoliberal institutionalist theories of Keohane and his students and the systemic liberal theories of Ikenberry and Deudney are classified as Innenpolitik (Ripsman et al., 2016). This is because they essentially hold that international institutions, which consist of states whose interests and policies are determined by domestic societal coalitions, by extension also 'rest upon the consent of the governed' (ibid 5).

Overall, by overemphasising the domestic environment and downplaying systemic factors, liberal theories fail to explain many aspects of international politics. For this reason, liberal theories cannot be employed in this study.

Another leading approach to the study of international politics is constructivism. The term 'constructivism' was introduced into international relations in 1989 by Nicholas Onuf in his book World of Our Making. His approach has enjoyed tremendous popularity because it demonstrated that the study of international relations without norms and ideas was senseless (Baylis, Smith and Owens, 2014). The importance of their inclusion in studies of international relations became most apparent at the end of the Cold War, when the neorealist and neo-liberalist approaches failed to provide satisfactory explanations for political developments, as materialism and individualism could not grasp the impact of norms and ideas on political outcomes.

According to social constructivists, norms and ideas are important for explaining the behaviour of actors and their perceptions of the world and themselves. More specifically, they argue that international relations entail much more than power politics and are at least equally affected by ideas (Rosamond, 2007). This point of view suggests that the 'fundamental

structures of politics are social rather than strictly material and that these structures shape actors' identities and interests, rather than just their behaviour' (Wendt 1995, 71-72). Consequently, social constructivists argue that our perceptions of international relations can significantly contribute to greater international security.

One of the core social constructivist scholars, Alexander Wendt, shares the principal assumptions of realism, which are: that states are rational actors, states are the main actors in the anarchic international system, relations between states are characterised by mistrust, and therefore states are preoccupied with survival and the possession of offensive capabilities. However, in contrast to the neo-realist view that the structure is a consequence of the distribution of material power, Wendt argues that, in reality, the structure is a result of social relationships. According to Wendt, social structures are composed of three elements: 'shared knowledge, material resources and practices' (Wendt 1995, 72). The element of knowledge is of particular importance, as it shapes how the world is constructed. This means that there is no independent reality of our understanding out there. Instead, our understanding of the world depends on our cultural background.

Constructivism has been particularly popular in the study of the EU's energy security policy, mainly because of the uniqueness of the EU as an actor. The theory contributes significantly to our understanding of why the EU attempts to export its internal structures of multilateral governance to its relations with external partners such as Russia. However, constructivists reject or downplay the idea that the international system can have an independent effect on states' behaviour. Instead, they assume that the actors ascribe meaning to the external environment and the behaviour of other states. This is not to say that ideas and norms are not important, but rather that by downplaying the importance of the relative distribution of material power, in the case under investigation, constructivism cannot explain

many aspects of states behaviour. For this reason, constructivism has not been employed in this particular study.

Besides Constructivism, another popular theoretical approach to the study of energy security is that of securitisation. Securitisation theory suggests that national security policy is not fixed but carefully designed by policymakers. According to this approach, political issues are presented as extreme security issues and labelled as threatening by security actors who have the power to move issues 'beyond politics' to deal with them in an urgent manner (Eroukhmanoff, 2018). So, according to the securitisation theory, security issues do not simply exist out there but must be presented as such by securitising actors (ibid). For example, calling energy dependence a 'threat to energy and national security' shifts energy from low priority to a high priority political issue that requires immediate attention and action.

Securitisation theory has been particularly useful in explaining why issues that are not essentially threatening in themselves are often referred to as a threat. For this reason, the theory has been widely used in the EU focused literature. However, although securitisation theory could help explain the US effort to present European energy dependence on Russian as a threat and explain US actions, this approach would only help to answer the research question partially. For this reason, securitisation has not been employed in this particular study.

Overall, the first section of this chapter discussed the main theories of international relations and demonstrated that their explanatory power is quite limited. The following section will demonstrate that Neoclassical Realism addresses all these shortcomings and can provide a much more nuanced explanation of the phenomenon under investigation.

2.2 Neoclassical Realism

The previous section concluded that realism, liberalism, and social constructivism - the main IR theories that have been used to explain US-Russian and EU-Russian relations - cannot be used for this study because each of these theories alone cannot explain the phenomenon under investigation. This section will present and discuss neoclassical realism, which combines both structural and domestic level or ideational variables to explain state behaviours.

This study posits that neither systemic and material variables nor ideational factors can be ignored when studying states' foreign policy behaviour. Excluding systemic pressure and material variables from any study involving or related to US-Russian competition would result in failure to provide a comprehensive analysis, as traditional power and security concerns are an inextricable part of their tense relationship. On the other hand, the hostility and mistrust between Russia and the United States are more than security competition, as a structural realist perspective would argue. Therefore, the incorporation of ideational factors that affect decision-making is required. For the above reasons, neoclassical realism, which holds that the perceptions of policymakers must supplement structural factors, is the preferred theoretical starting point for this study.

Proponents of Neoclassical Realism, like neorealism, suggest that a state's foreign policy is driven primarily by its position in the international system and, more specifically, by its relative material capabilities. However, they argue that the impact of systemic factors on that state's foreign policy is indirect and complex. This is because these systemic factors are filtered through intervening variables such as leaders' images and domestic politics (Rose, 1998).

For example, neoclassical realists argue that changes in relative power may not essentially affect a country's foreign policy over the short or medium term. This is because

what matters is the statesmen's perception of relative power and not relative power itself. In other words, foreign policy is made by individuals that have their own perception of a country's relative power and their own interpretation of the external environment and they make policies based on these perceptions (Friedberg 1988). This explains why governments do not all react in the same way to external pressures and incentives.

Thus, when studying the foreign policy behaviour of states, one needs to incorporate leaders' perception of relative power in the analysis and trace how domestic factors interpret the threats and opportunities that the external environment presents to them. By using domestic perceptions of the international system and domestic incentives as intervening variables, neoclassical realism can provide more robust explanations than neorealism or classical realism.

Not surprisingly, the coherence of the realist school is often questioned due to the lack of consensus on whether realism could be viewed as a single unified theory. However, neoclassical realists are not interested in the creation of universal concepts. Instead, theorists of this approach tend to examine which of the realist strands best reflects a specific case at a specific time (Wohlforth, 2008). For them, the selection of theory depends on the given situation and period, as different approaches provide a more accurate and better understanding of political developments during different periods. Thus, for Neoclassical realists, theoretical sub-schools such as Defensive and Offensive Realism are not in all cases and times right or wrong; they are nonetheless, a useful tool contributing to foreign policy analysis by providing rich conceptual frameworks.

2.2.1 The different types of neoclassical realism

According to Ripsman et al. (2016, 25-26), there are two types of neoclassical realist theory. Type I 'utilises the intervening state- and individual- level variables identified by critics of

structural realism as explanations for suboptimal policy choices that are at odds with systemic imperatives'. Theorists that use Type I Neoclassical Realism argue that foreign policy choices in most cases could be explained by employing neorealism, whereas neoclassical realism could be used to explain rare cases of 'deviance from structural realist expectations' (Ripsman et al. 2016, 29).

On the other hand, type II Neoclassical Realism rests on the assumption that this approach 'can do more than explain anomalies' (ibid) and explain a broader range of foreign policy behaviour. (ibid). While theorists of this approach agree that when states face imminent threats and little policy choice, they 'usually behave as structural realists would expect and neoclassical realism can only explain behaviour at odds with systemic imperatives', Ripsman et al. suggest that this is rarely the case (ibid). According to the authors, more often than not, 'the international environment does not present a clear and imminent threat' which allows states to choose from a range of policy options 'rather than a clearly optimal policy dictated by international circumstances' (ibid). The view here is that the policy choices of the states, in common circumstances, have much more to do with the leaders' worldviews, strategic culture, state-society relations, and domestic institutions (these will be discussed in more detail below).

However, Ripsman et al. argue that both types of neoclassical realism are incomplete. This is because they provide little information on both the nature of the systemic stimuli (the independent variable) and the domestic political factors (the intervening variables) that can affect decision making and policy implementation. They also limit the explanatory scope of the policy choices made by the states (dependent variable), without 'considering that these choices can be of 'consequential importance for broader interstate phenomena, such as international outcomes and structural change in the international system' (Ripsman et al. 2016, 32).

Overall, these two types of neoclassical realism differ from structural realism in that they suggest that systemic pressures are filtered through intervening domestic variables to produce foreign policy responses. In other words, while policymakers construct policies that ought to respond to the external environment, the process is often influenced by domestic intervening variables such as leaders' images, strategic culture, state-society relations and domestic political institutions. These variables can enable or constrain leaders when it comes to policy selection or implementation. This, in turn, means that statesmen do not necessarily select the optimal foreign policy responses but might have to choose alternative policies to 'navigate between systemic constraints and domestic political imperatives' (ibid).

Ripsman et al. (2016) propose a third variant of neoclassical realism. This study considers the type III of neoclassical realism as a more appropriate starting point for this research project. In this context, the next section will detail this approach's conception of the international system and will then continue to discuss the intervening and dependent variables.

2.2.2 Type III neoclassical realism: The Independent, Intervening and Dependent Variables

The Independent Variable

As neoclassical realism suggests, a state's foreign policy is driven primarily by its place in the international system and its relative capabilities. This makes the international system the starting point of neoclassical realist theory. In light of this, it is imperative to discuss what constitutes an international system.

> There are various definitions of the term 'international system' in the academic literature. Type III neoclassical realism posits that the international system is the interstate system that emerged in Western Europe during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and that by the late nineteenth century and early twentieth centuries… had

> grown into a single global international system subsuming previously autonomous systems in East Asia, sub-Saharan Africa, Central Asia, the Indian subcontinent, and the Americas (Ripsman et al., 2016, 35).

For neoclassical realists, the primary units in the international system are the territorial states (ibid). Although theorists of this approach 'do not deny the importance of a range of actors of different sizes and compositions' they see the international system as 'largely statecentric' (ibid). This is because states are the most politically important actors, as none of the other actors can 'achieve important objectives internationally' unless they are supported by powerful states (ibid).

Similar to structural realists, neoclassical realists posit that the international system is anarchic. However, they see anarchy not as an independent causal force but as a permissive condition. This is because 'anarchy gives states considerable latitude in defining their security interests and the relative distribution of power merely sets parameters for grand strategy' (Lobell et al., 2009, 7). Theorists of this approach, however, suggest that the task of assessing the intentions and the power of other states is not straightforward. Leaders can misinterpret the external environment and respond with inefficient policies. Lobell et al. note that statesmen who 'consistently fail to respond' to systemic incentives and pressure 'put their state's survival at risk' (Lobell et al., 2009, 7).

International System Structure and Structural Modifiers

Neoclassical realists suggest that their understanding of system structure is different and broader than that of Waltz, whose concepts of the structure suggests that 'units differently juxtaposed and combined behave differentially and interacting, produce different outcomes' (Ripsman et al., 2016, 39). Instead, the authors adopt the view that there are 'broad systemic, but not structural factors', that not only affect the capacity and desire of units to interact, 'but also determine what types of levels of interaction are both possible and desirable' (ibid). These

factors, while not part of the structure, are ‘clearly systemic’ and ‘profoundly condition the significance of structure and the meaning of the term system itself’ (ibid). Ripsman et al. call these factors ‘structural modifiers’.

The term was coined by Snyder and is used to describe systemic variables that ‘modify the effect of the more basic structural elements on the interaction process, but they are not the interaction itself’ (Snyder, 1996, 169). Ripsman et al. note that to Snyder, structural modifiers are ‘external and systemic as they affect all units in a similar manner’, however, they are ‘distinct from the numbers of units and the distribution of capabilities that Waltz defines as structures’ (Ripsman et al., 2016, 40).

The authors restrict structural modifiers to ‘a class of material variables at the level of the international system or a regional sub-system, but which are not structural’ (ibid). These according to the authors, would include ‘geography, the rates of technological diffusion, and offense-defense balance in military technologies’ (ibid) This is because they can modify the impact of the system’s structure; in other words, its anarchic ordering principle and the relative distribution of capabilities, ‘on the parameters of strategic interaction and the likely external behaviour of individual units’ (Ripsman et al., 2016, 40). However, not all structural modifiers affect all states evenly. Some have indeed ‘a uniform impact’ on the behaviour of units within the international system, but for some others, the impact is limited to particular categories of units, or particular sectors or regions (ibid, 41).

Relative power

Similarly to neorealists, neoclassical realists argue that a state’s foreign policy is driven primarily by its relative material capabilities and consequently, its position in the international system. However, theorists of this approach argue that there is no straightforward relationship between the relative distribution of power and states’ foreign policy (Taliaferro, 2009).

Politicians make decisions based on calculations and perceptions of their relative power and that of others in the international system. Thus, what matters for neoclassical realists is the statesmen's perception of relative power and not the relative power itself (ibid).

Theorists of this approach (type III neoclassical realism), following other neoclassical realists, adopt the view that power is a means-to-an-end, and not as an-end-unto-itself, (Wohlforth, 1993). Here it is important to note that Neoclassical Realists, like other realists, use various measurements of a state's material capabilities. The most common are: size of the territory, size of the population, demographic trends within the population, GDP (gross domestic product), annual defence spending as a percentage of GDP, size and composition of military forces, military research and development, and natural resources endowments (Ripsman et al., 2016). Other realists, like Morgenthau, include resources such as the national morale and the quality of leadership and diplomacy as elements of national power. However, what is important, according to Ripsman et al., is that scholars can 'combine the more important material resources at a state's disposal, into some measure of overall national power' (ibid, 44). While these measurements have been subject to criticism and certainly are not without limitations, the authors note that 'elements of the national power approach, and the resulting efforts to develop some qualitative and quantitative indicators of material capabilities (however inexact), are consistent with the soft-positivist epistemology underlying neoclassical realism' (Ripsman et al., 2016, 44).).

Clarity

A critical systemic variable for type III neoclassical realism is the clarity of signals the international system presents to states; it is also one that distinguishes neoclassical realism from structural realism. According to Ripsman et al. (2016), the levels of clarity can vary depending on three factors. These are 'the degree to which threats and opportunities are readily

discernable', 'whether the system provides information on the time horizons of threats and opportunities' and 'whether optimal policy options stand out or not' (ibid 46).

When it comes to the first component of clarity, neoclassical realists understand clear threats as other states that meet the following conditions: are revisionist or have expressed intention to inflict harm either to the territorial integrity of other states or their core interests; possess the economic or military capability to harm other states; and intend to use these capabilities to cause harm in short order (ibid).

Clear opportunities on the other hand 'require evidence of a state's improving capabilities vis-à-vis other states' (ibid, 47). This can occur if a state's economic or militarily capabilities improve significantly, the capabilities of its adversaries deteriorate, or both happen at the same time. For neoclassical realists, clear opportunities involve evidence of the following: the distribution of capabilities favour the state in question; other parties lack the political determination to counter the state's policies; and the understanding that favourable conditions will not last indefinitely, therefore immediate action is imperative (ibid).

When it comes to the second element of clarity, time horizons, theorists of this approach argue that leaders often find it difficult to estimate these. This is because they require an accurate understanding of adversaries' intentions and capabilities. The accurate understanding of adversaries' behaviour; however, whether that signals 'an imminent threat or an indefinite withdrawal', 'eases the strategic dilemmas a state faces' (Ripsman et al., 2016, 48).

The third element of clarity is the clarity of options. Neoclassical realists, however, suggest that optimal policy options rarely stand out. More specifically, they suggest that while the international system often limits states' policy responses, it rarely provides clarity about the optimal strategic response in a specific situation (ibid).

Overall, neoclassical realists see clarity as a critical systemic variable for case analysis. They suggest that the greater the degree of clarity is over the nature of systemic threats and

opportunities, the time horizons in which they are expected to unfold, and the optimal policy options available to states, the lower will be the policy variance across states (ibid). Less clarity, on the other hand, provides greater room for leaders to pursue unique policies based on their interpretation of the external environment or strategic culture (ibid).

Although theorists of this approach acknowledge that the precise measurement of clarity is difficult, they believe it is still a useful concept that can contribute to our understanding of foreign policy choices and international outcomes.

Additionally, neoclassical realists posit that since the international system rarely signals clear messages, states most often than not face uncertainty about other states' intentions, the balance of capabilities, and the time horizons they confront. For them 'uncertainty is an inherent property of an anarchic international system' (ibid, 51), and they suggest that the less clear the international system, the higher the degree of uncertainty. However, even if the international system signals clear messages because these messages are filtered through intervening variables, theorists of this approach argue that some states might still experience uncertainty.

Permissive/Restrictive Strategic Environments

In addition to clarity, another key variable for neoclassical realists is the nature of a state's strategic environment. While clarity concerns the scope of information the international system provides, the strategic environment concerns the content of that information.

The strategic environment can be permissive or restrictive. According to theorists of this approach, this depends on the 'imminence and the magnitude of the threats and opportunities' that a state faces (ibid, 52). More specifically, they argue that all things being equal, 'the more imminent the threat or opportunity and the more dangerous the threat (or more

enticing the opportunity) the more restrictive the state's strategic environment is' (ibid, 52) and vice versa.

Overall, this section discussed type I, type II and type III neoclassical realism and clarified that neoclassical realist theories agree that a state's foreign behaviour is shaped by its relative power and position in the international system. After discussing the independent variable, the next section will focus on domestic level intervening variables that can influence foreign policy responses to the external environment.

The Intervening variables

As discussed earlier, neoclassical realism differs from structural realism in that it incorporates in its analysis domestic intervening variables that condition how states respond to the pressures and opportunities that the international system presents to them (Rose, 1998). This section will first discuss neoclassical realism criticism that these intervening variables are often selected in an ad hoc manner, are inconsistent with core realist assumptions, and can undermine the explanatory power of the theory. It will then discuss the four categories of intervening variables.

According to Ripsman et al. (2016), there are four broad categories of intervening variables. These are the leaders' images and perceptions, strategic culture, state-society relations and domestic institutional arrangements (ibid). In essence, these variables are the factors that shape the foreign policy behaviour of states. The more permissive the strategic environment, the greater the impact of these variables on states' foreign policy responses. However, even when the strategic environment is restrictive, meaning that states are presented with limited policy options, these intervening variables can still affect states' foreign behaviour both during the policy selection and implementation processes. The difference is that in this

case, leaders have fewer policy options and tools in order to respond to the external environment.

The incorporation of intervening variables in neoclassical realist analysis has attracted much criticism. Some critics of this approach often argue that neoclassical realism's intervening variables are often chosen in an ad hoc manner to explain a particular state's foreign policy (Walt, 2002). Others claim that theorists of this approach use a wide range of unrelated intervening variables, the incorporation of which not only seems inconsistent with the core realist assumptions but also undermines the theory's predictive power (Elman, 1996).

However, the work of Ripsman et al. (2016) shows that these issues are not unresolvable. In their book Neoclassical Realist Theory of International Politics, the authors categorise the intervening variables in four groups and link these to the three domestic processes they have identified as 'potentially distorting' states' foreign policy behaviour; perception, decision making, and policy implementation (ibid, 60).

According to the same authors, all four categories of intervening variables have a direct impact on one or more of these processes. For example, perception is affected by leaders' images and strategic culture, besides the international factors, while decision making and policy implementation are determined by strategic culture, state-society relations, and domestic political institutions (Ripsman et al., 2016). Thus, the intervening variables are neither selected on an ad hoc basis nor are irrelevant to the neoclassical realist theory.

Furthermore, according to the authors, different intervening variables can influence a state's foreign policy behaviour to different degrees over time. They suggest that leaders' perception will have a significant influence on states foreign policy responses during a crisis. This is because when facing time constraints and pressure, other variables will have fewer opportunities to influence the decision-making process. The other variables, strategic culture, state-society relations, and domestic institutions, concern domestic processes through which

decision making occurs. These address the degree of leaders' autonomy and the 'constraints under which they operate, their socialisation, domestic distributional competition, and the mechanisms through which differences are resolved' (ibid, 61). These, according to Ripsman et al. (2016), are likely to have greater influence on states' foreign policy behaviour in the 'short-to-medium and medium-to-long term, when culture, society and institutions' have more opportunities to 'shape and constrain the formulation of policy planning and grand strategy' (ibid).

Leaders' Images

Ripsman et al. (2016) label the individual decision-makers as the foreign policy executive (FPE). They include individuals who sit at the helm of the state: the president, prime minister, key cabinet members, ministers, and advisors responsible for policymaking. These individuals often have access to private information and intelligence about foreign states that are exclusive to them, thus making them the most important intervening variable in foreign policy analysis (Ripsman et al., 2016, 62).

The FPE holds 'a set of core values, beliefs, and images that guide their interaction with the outside world and their understanding of it' (ibid). These core beliefs, according to Ripsman et al., are 'not easily altered' (ibid). In contrast, 'once formed, they act as cognitive filters that inform how leaders process information – what they pay attention to; what they ignore; and how they understand signals, information, and events' (ibid). In other words, all incoming information about the external environment is processed through these 'cognitive filters' which according to Ripsman et al., 'personalise and bias the leader's perception of the external stimuli' (ibid).

According to neoclassical realists, other factors, such as a leader's character and personality, can also affect a state's foreign policy behaviour. So, in order to understand a

country's foreign policy, one has to take into account 'the character and the psychological make-up of its political leaders, which are critical intervening variables' that can explain how the FPE responds to systemic pressures (ibid, 63).

Furthermore, the authors (2016) argue that the way a state responds to systemic stimuli is also determined by leaders' operational codes. More specifically, they argue that every leader has an operational code, 'comprising a set of master beliefs' responsible for how they 'understand' the incoming information and 'guide' their decision making (ibid, 64). According to the authors, these master beliefs are shaped by one's 'philosophical beliefs about politics, instrumental beliefs about which strategies are best to achieve one's interests, and images of one's enemy and oneself' (ibid).

Many neoclassical realist scholars have incorporated into their analysis perceptual intervening variables, which influence how leaders perceive and assess the balance of power and predict power trends. Advocates of this approach also tend to distinguish between the actual distribution of power and the FPE's perception of it in different places and times (ibid). According to Wohlforth, who examined the role of the FPE's perceptions of power and their impact on the nature of Soviet-American competition, the leaders distinguish four aspects of power (Wohlforth, 1993). In short, these are 'the elements of power (what people think power is)', 'the distribution of power (how the state compares to other great powers)', 'the mechanics of power (the operation of the balance of power)', and 'prestige (the state's relative status and influence over international politics)' (Ripsman et al., 2016, 65).

Strategic Culture

The second cluster of intervening variables that can influence the way a state perceives and responds to the external environment concerns a country's strategic culture. As noted in Ripsman et al. (2016) scholars tend to differentiate between organisational culture and the

broader notion of culture. For example, some authors might focus on the impact the military culture might have on national security policy formulation (Kier, 1999) while others can adopt a broader understanding of strategic culture (Kupchan, 1996) such as 'entrenched beliefs, worldviews, and shared expectations of a society as a whole' (Ripsman et al., 2016, 66).

According to the authors, strategic culture can impose severe constraints on the ability of FPE to adjust a state's foreign policy to systemic changes. Kupchan (as cited in Ripsman et al., 2016) suggests that decision-makers can be trapped by strategic culture, 'which can prevent them from reorienting grand strategy to meet international imperatives and avoid self-defeating behaviour'.

State-Society Relations

The third set of core intervening variables concerns state-society relations, which the authors define as, 'the character of interactions between the central institutions of the state and various economic and/or societal groups' (Ripsman et al., 2016, 71). When examining state-society relations, neoclassical realists usually focus on the degree of accord or discord between state and society, the degree to which society trusts state leaders with foreign policy selection, particularly in the case of disagreements, the dynamics of coalition politics in the state, the 'level of political and social cohesion within the state, and public support for general foreign policy and national security objectives' (ibid).

Overall, neoclassical realists see state-society relations as a factor that can significantly affect the foreign policy behaviour of states.

Domestic Institutions

The final set of core intervening variables concerns domestic political institutions, which, as Ripsman et al. notes 'often crystallize state-society relations' (ibid 75). These institutions set

the parameters within which competition over policy selection and implementation occurs. In other words, they determine who, to what extent, and at what stage can contribute to the policymaking process, given that domestic institutions can significantly impact FPEs' ability to respond to the changes in the external environment.

Overall, this section discussed four different groups of intervening variables and explained how ideational factors such as norms and identities are relevant to neoclassical realism. By incorporating intervening variables such as domestic politics into the analysis, neoclassical realism can provide a more nuanced explanation of international relations. It can also answer the constructivist critique that this approach ignores essential elements and factors of international politics due to its obsession with material power (materialist ontology) and the Westphalian conception of the state (Costalli, 2009).

However, at this stage, it is essential to clarify that not all of the discussed variables are important for this study. This research project will focus only on two intervening variables, the leaders' images, and strategic culture. On leaders' images, because first, the executive usually has a greater influence on national security-related decisions compared to other branches of government. Second, because in Europe, the conclusion of energy agreements is generally 'the prerogative of the executive' (Herranz-Surrallés, 2017, 186).

When it comes to the choice of strategic culture as an intervening variable, this study posits that a country's historical experiences shape the worldviews and beliefs of its political elite and society, which in turn can shape and constrain the ability of political leaders to respond to systemic changes. As evident in chapter four of this thesis, this is particularly true in the cases of the US, Russia, and European states. Thus, chapter four looks into the historical experiences of the states/actors involved in this project with the aim of improving our overall understanding of how historical experiences - and as a result the strategic culture - can shape states' foreign policy behaviour.

In other words, strategic culture is the context within which foreign policy decisions are made. Each of the empirical chapters then also discusses the context within which foreign policy decisions are made.

Here it is also important to note that although this study does not ignore the importance of the other two intervening variables, it suggests they have little explanatory power when it comes to this particular research project. This is because they have either fewer opportunities to influence decision making compared to leaders' images and strategic culture, or the impact is not as significant.

The Dependent Variable

After discussing the independent and intervening variables, this section will focus on the dependent variables. More specifically, it will first discuss the dependent variables for type I and type II neoclassical realism and will then focus on the dependent variables of type III.

For type I and type II neoclassical realists, the dependent variable is a state's foreign policy response to international system stimuli. Ripsman et al. (2016, 82) accept that this is correct in the short-to-medium-term timeframe but argue that 'it would be a mistake to say that neoclassical realism can only explain states' foreign policies and grand strategic adjustment'.

For type III neoclassical realists, the dependent variable can vary depending on the timeframe of a particular case. More specifically, theorists of this approach suggest that, depending on the timeframe, the dependent variables can include not only foreign policy choices as type I and type II neoclassical realism would suggest, but also international outcomes, produced by the interaction of foreign policy choices and 'the systemic structure itself' (ibid, 80).

More specifically, in the shorter term, which can involve days, weeks and months, the authors suggest that neoclassical realism can explain states' short-term policy responses to the

opportunities and threats generated by the international system. According to the authors, in the shorter term, states usually face 'rather fixed international circumstances', where significant shifts in relative power are highly unlikely. For this reason, in the shorter term, they suggest that policymaking consists of 'navigating the given power distribution' (ibid, 83).

In the short-to-medium term, which can involve months and years, the authors note that policymaking is less responsive to fixed international circumstances, and more forward-looking. So, policymakers 'engage in strategic planning or attempt to construct grand strategy' (ibid).

In the medium-to-longer term, which can concern years and decades, neoclassical realism can explain more than just the foreign policy of states. This is because during this timeframe the interaction of strategies pursued by different great powers can have an impact on international systemic outcomes. So, according to type III neoclassical realism, a study that covers years or decades can explain international outcomes.

Finally, over the longer term, which can involve decades, 'international outcomes, and policies and grand strategies of the principal units themselves can help reshape international structure' (Ripsman et al.,2016, 86). So, a study that covers decades might be able to pick up and explain any changes in the nature of the international system.

Overall, for type III neoclassical realists, the dependent variable can vary depending on the timeframe. Ripsman et al. note that whatever the timeframe, the logic that the authors developed remains realist, as it accepts that the structure of the international system has the 'dominant influence over the range of systemic outcomes that are possible' (ibid, 89). What differentiates it from neorealism, however, is that neoclassical realism suggests that the impact of systemic factors on that state's foreign policy is indirect and complex because these are filtered through intervening variables such as leaders' images and domestic politics (Rose,

1998). This is why neoclassical realism answers the question, 'To what degree is state x's policy a response to external pressure and incentives in addition to being internally generated?'

Despite the differences with neorealism, Rathbun notes that neoclassical realism should not be regarded as heresy but as the 'natural outgrowth of neorealism' (Rathbun 2008, 296). The author argues that when it is perceived in that way, it becomes distinct from other theories such as liberalism and constructivism (ibid).

By placing ideas as the key intervening variable between systemic forces and foreign policy behaviour, neoclassical realism has both the predictive capacity and the ability to provide rigorous historical explanations. By doing so, it also proposes a clear causal chain. This chain involves three steps: the independent variable, intervening variable and dependent variable.

Despite the strengths of neoclassical realism, in its original formulation, the theory (type III neoclassical realism) cannot be used as an analytical framework for this particular research project. In this context, the aim of the next section is twofold: to explain why neoclassical realism in its original formulation cannot be used for this study, and to introduce a new neoclassical realist model of foreign policy that aims to improve our understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

2.3 What is missing from Neoclassical Realism?

When compared to other realist theories, neoclassical realism can more fully and accurately account for state foreign policy choices by incorporating systemic pressure and domestic ideas into their explanation of international politics. The problem is that it tends to do so by focusing on one level of analysis. For example, while neoclassical realists provide an account of the foreign policy behaviour of state X, taking into account both systemic and domestic variables,

they do not investigate the impact of that policy on the foreign policy decisions of other states (usually less powerful states). This implies that in its original formulation, neoclassical realism cannot be applied to a complex question, such as the one under investigation in this thesis. A simple observation of the *larger picture* will quickly lead to the realisation that, in order to answer the research question, a two-level analysis is required. The section below will first discuss the larger picture, demonstrating the level of complexity of the particular research project and thus justifying the need for a two-level analysis. It will then present and discuss the *Two-Level Model* and explain how it will be employed in this study.

At this stage, it is important to explain that the Two-Level Model presented and used in this study is different from Robert Putnam's Two-Level Game. Putnam's model suggests that international negotiations between states take place at two levels, the international level (governments level) and the national level (interest groups) (Putnam, 1988). More specifically, he argues that pressures on the national level exerted by different groups are taken into account by governments trying to meet their demands. Nevertheless, at the same time, governments seek to minimise the impact of these developments on international negotiations. Without a doubt, Putman's model can shed some light on how international negotiations are conducted by state officials. However, it can be of little use in this particular case. This is because the case under investigation involves many different state actors on two different levels and seeks to explain how foreign policy choices of actors at Level 1 can affect foreign policy decisions at Level 2.

2.3.1 The Larger Picture and the need for the Two-Level Model

Great Power Level

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the US unilateral foreign policies, including NATO enlargement and the Kosovo War, gradually eroded Russia's hopes for equal partnership. Evidence shows that the US refusal to treat Russia as an equal partner and as a great power, as the Kremlin expected at the end of the Cold War, came as a result of Moscow's inability to respond to these developments. It can be argued that the developments in the early post-Soviet period matched the relative distribution of power at that time, with the US interests prevailing over Russia's interests. That soon led to the realisation in Moscow that in order to protect its interests, Russia needed to restore its great power status.

The energy boom of the mid-2000s led to the gradual recovery of the Russian economy and, in turn, to the modernisation of the country's military sector. This then allowed Russia to challenge the concept of a US-dominated unipolar world openly.

The change in Russia's relative power was interpreted in Washington as a threat to the US national security interests. The realisation that energy exports fuelled the growing Russian power turned the attention of policymakers in Washington to the EU-Russian energy partnership. This partnership not only increased Russia's income in hard currency that was then reinvested in the country's military sector but also boosted Russia's political influence in Europe, thus putting under threat the *status quo* favourable to the US balance of power on the continent.

In this context, and as neoclassical realists would expect, the US took several measures to contain the growing Russian power. These included efforts to convince the US European allies to diversify supplies away from Russia, promote alternative pipeline projects and suspend

the construction of Russian pipelines that would increase further the energy dependence of EU member states on Russian gas.

However, Russia's bilateral energy deals with Europe's most powerful states have secured Moscow a strong energy presence on the continent. This has been achieved by taking advantage of the asymmetric needs and capabilities of European member states. Russian practices include offering attractive deals to specific member states and appointing high profile ex-politicians to high profile roles in its energy companies.

The roots of Moscow's influence over oil and gas policy dates back to the Soviet period. At that time, the Kremlin determinedly began an effort to make Russian energy resources indispensable throughout Eastern and Western Europe. According to Klinghoffer, by the 1970s, Soviet energy influence was a major headache for the West (Klinghoffer, 1977). This energy influence declined temporarily in the late 1990s due to low oil prices and the collapse of the USSR, and the privatisation of many state-owned oil companies. However, 'Russia's ample resources and extensive network of pipelines ensured that its "petro-power" was ready to re-emerge under President Putin' (Newnham 2011, 135).

Overall, at this level, the Great Power Level, while Russia aims to further increase its relative power by increasing energy exports to Europe, and support its Great Power aspirations, the US attempts to contain Russia's growing influence by targeting the 'fuel' of that power, as expected by the neoclassical realist theory. The clash of US-Russian security interests, and in consequence of their foreign policies, creates an external environment full of opportunities and threats for other states.

Before moving on to discussing the Intra-European level, it is important to explain what is meant by 'clash of interests'.

Clash of Interests

Some theorists take ‘the notion of interest to be the very central notion in politics’ (Benditt, 1975, 245). This is because it is often used as justification or as a criticism of political decisions, actions and policies. In addition, the concept of interest plays an important role in the explanation of political developments. Despite the fact that it has become a common term among politicians and political scientists, there is still no consensus over the definition of this concept, which differs from scholar to scholar. The meaning also varies from country to country. While there could be as many definitions of the term as there are researchers, in any case ‘in the face of potential threats’ and surely also opportunities, state FPEs, ‘inevitably have some conception of the national interest’ (Dueck, 2014, 272).

However, for most realist scholars, national interest entails ensuring the ‘survival and the broader security of the state’. Morgenthau argues that the national interest is the desire ‘to protect physical, political, and cultural identity against encroachment by other nations’ (Morgenthau, 1951, 972). Waltz argues that ‘to say that a country acts in its national interest means that, having examined its security requirements, it tries to meet them’ (Waltz, 1979, 134). In contrast, neoclassical realists suggest that ‘how a given state understands its national interests and role in the world’ depends on its national identity (Beach, 2012, 65). Neoclassical realism thus focuses on how norms and cultural forces frame national interests. Consequently, what states recognise as their security interests and goals is determined by their interpretation of the structure of the system and the perceptions and ideas that are present in the policymaking process.

For the purposes of this study, the term ‘*interests’* refers to foreign policy interests. In that respect, we accept the definition provided by the neoclassical realists who posit that the foreign policy interests of a state ‘are goals that drive a country’s external behaviour’ (Orban, 2008, 20). Nevertheless, because the essential nature of international politics is conflictual,

actors as ‘conflict groups’ find themselves in a position of clashing interests. In that respect, the *clash of interests* originates from the opposing interests of distinct groups.

After establishing what is meant by ‘clash of interests’ in this study, the next section will discuss the Intra-European level of analysis.

Intra-European Level

Since this study examines the impact of US-Russian security competition on the development of a common European energy security policy, it requires a two-level analysis. One that focuses on the great powers level (described above) and another one that studies how European policymakers interpret these opportunities and threats in their external environment and select and implement their policies in response to the systemic stimuli (Intra-European level).

When looking at the Intra-European level, it quickly becomes clear that states of the ‘New’ Europe depend on energy imports primarily from one country, Russia. Due to tense relations, these states view their energy dependence on Russia as inextricably linked to their national security (Valasek, 2005). For this reason, they interpret any Russian efforts that aim to bring more gas to Europe, and in turn increase the dependence on European states on Russian gas, as a threat. These states favour the diversification of gas supplies away from Russia and support any US efforts that aim to reduce the energy dependence of EU states on Russia. They also support any efforts that aim at creating a common energy security policy towards Russia as they see this as a way to enhance their energy and national security.

In contrast, ‘Old’ Europe sees its partnership with Russia as doing ‘business as usual’. Even after the recent escalation of the conflict in Eastern Ukraine, countries such as Germany, Italy, Austria and France, view Russia as a valuable energy partner. This is clearly evident in the agreement for the construction of Nord Stream II – a pipeline that was highly criticised by Central and Eastern European states. In general, the former countries have supported the

construction of Russian gas pipelines in Europe and the strengthening of the EU-Russian energy partnership, which they see as an opportunity to enhance their energy security. At the same time, they interpret US pressures to suspend the Russian pipelines as a threat to their energy interests.

Although 'Old' Europe's preference for bilateral energy deals with Russia has long delayed the development of a common European energy policy towards Russia in the more recent years, and as the security competition between the US and Russia intensified, there has been significant progress in that direction. Thus, in order to understand to what extent great power competition has affected the development of a common European energy security policy, it is essential to examine how European leaders have interpreted the opportunities and threats generated by the clashing US-Russian interests and the interaction of their foreign policies.

2.3.2 The Two-Level Model: Independent variables, intervening variables and dependent variables

After demonstrating how the two-level analysis will contribute to answering the research question, we now need to specify the independent variables, intervening variables and dependent variables for both levels, in order to evaluate the causal impact of the specific hypothesised independent variables and intervening variables on the dependent variables

Level I - The Independent Variable

At Level I, it is suggested that the change in Russia's relative power (both military power and power in terms of influence over Europe) revived security competition between the US and

Russia. Therefore, here we suggest that the change in Russia's relative power is the Independent Variable for Level 1 (see Figure 5).

Figure 5 The Two-Level Neoclassical Realist Model

Source: Created by the author.

Level I - The Intervening Variable

As we have discussed earlier, Neoclassical Realism focuses on four categories of Intervening Variables. These are the Leaders' images, Strategic Culture, State-Society Relations and Domestic Institutions (Ripsman et al., 2016). However, due to the nature of the topic, not all of these variables are relevant to this study. After reviewing a good number of primary documents, it was decided that leaders' images and strategic culture had a greater impact on how the US and Russia respond to external stimuli.

Level I - The Dependent Variable

The US and Russian foreign policies towards European states is the Dependent Variable at Level I since the area of interest in this study is the European energy politics.

Level II - Independent Variable

The Independent Variable for Level II is different from that for Level I. For Level I, the Independent Variable is the change in Russia's relative power, while for Level II, it is the Incentives and Pressures (opportunities and threats) that have resulted from US-Russian security competition.

Level II - Intervening Variable

The intervening variables for level two are leaders' images and strategic culture. Again, after reviewing a good number of primary documents, it was determined that other variables have little impact on the manner in which EU states responded to external stimuli.

Dependent Variable

The Energy Policy of EU Member States is the Dependent Variable as we are looking to investigate whether US-Russian clashing interests affected the development of the energy policies of the EU Member states, in turn affecting the development of a common policy in EU. Thus, here the selection of the dependent variable flows directly from the research question.

Conclusion

This chapter presented and discussed different theories of International Relations and their strengths and weaknesses when applied to the study of EU-Russian energy relations. Following an extensive discussion on competing theories, it was concluded that of all the theories examined, Neoclassical Realism (type III) constitutes the optimal theoretical basis for

this research project, because it provides an explanatory account of the foreign policy behaviour of states by taking into account both systemic and domestic level variables. However, considering the complexity of the research question, the theory could not be applied in its original formulations. In this context, the author introduced a new variant of the Neoclassical Realist model, the Two-Level Model. This theoretical model will be employed to evaluate the causal impact of the specified hypothesised Independent and Intervening variables on the Dependent variables, thus allowing the researcher to test the developed hypothesis against empirical findings.

Chapter Three - Methodology

The purpose of this chapter is to explain and justify the methodology employed in the thesis. It is important to clarify that when an author discusses the methodology of a research project, they refer to the procedures, practices and system of methods that are used to answer the research question. As Krippendorff suggests:

> The purpose of methodology is to enable researchers to plan and examine critically the logic, composition and protocols of research methods; to evaluate the performance of individual techniques; and to estimate the likelihood of particular research designs to contribute to knowledge (2004a, xxi).

Thus, each research paper should include a clear methodology section that will provide information about the conduct of the research and enable replication of the study (King, 1995). This will contribute to other political scientists' understanding of how the researcher reached particular findings.

After a brief discussion of key terms and concepts used in this chapter, this chapter will be structured as follows. The first section discusses the logic of inquiry and outlines the research strategies used in this case study. The next section then explains and justifies the case studies used in this research project. Section three focuses on methodology selected and alternatives not selected, while section four addresses the ethical questions for this study. Finally, the last section of this chapter introduces the operationalisation process of this study which explains how the key variables will be measured.

However, before moving to the first part of this chapter, it is essential to discuss the main term and concepts used in this chapter.

Researchers in any discipline, whether aware of it or not, are guided in the way they conduct their research by underlying philosophical positions, taken towards the nature of reality

(ontological position) and towards the nature of knowledge (epistemological position). Marsh et al. suggest that a researcher's ontological and epistemological positions are central to their research, as 'they shape the approach to the theory and the methods' that are utilised in their work (Marsh et al., 2002, 17). In fact, Marsh et al. suggest that one's ontological and epistemological positions 'are like a skin, not a sweater: they cannot be put on or taken off whenever the researcher sees fit' (ibid). Instead, these stances are grounded deeply in the researcher's beliefs about the world and therefore, cannot be changed. In that context, the author suggests that 'all students of political science should recognise and acknowledge their own ontological and epistemological positions and be able to defend these positions against critiques from other positions' (ibid).

At this point, it is also important to mention that there are many ways that political scientists can test their theories and answer their research questions. The most popular of which fall into the following three categories: quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods.

Qualitative research is a process of inquiry that aims at gathering in-depth insights into a problem and building a complex picture of a particular phenomenon of interest. Thus, it involves the collection and analysis of non-numerical data, usually from a relatively small number of cases. There are a variety of methods of data collection in qualitative research. Examples include participants' observations, textual (from books) or visual analysis (from videos) and interviews (individual or group), unstructured or semi-structured interviews, and focus groups.

Quantitative research is an inquiry process examining an identified problem that is based on testing a theory measured by numerical data or data that can be converted into numbers. This research approach emphasises the production of precise and generalisable statistical findings. Quantitative research methods can be categorised into experimental or

observational; examples include data collection through polls, questionnaires, and large scale surveys.

Finally, mixed methods research is the type of research in which a researcher combines elements of both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The choice of one method over the other depends on the nature of the research topic and the type of information needed to answer the research question.

The next section of this chapter discusses the logic of inquiry and outlines the research strategies used in this case study.

3.1 Logic of enquiry

In order to conduct research, researchers need to adopt a logic of enquiry, which is essentially a research strategy that is employed to answer research questions (Blaikie, 2007). So the logic of enquiry in this study refers to the strategy that was used for this research project. According to Blaikie (2007), there are four main research strategies: inductive, deductive, retroductive and abductive. However, only the inductive and deductive are relevant to this study. Thus, this section aims to explain how the chosen research strategies may be applied to this research project.

3.1.1 Inductive and deductive research strategies

According to Wilson (2010), an inductive approach starts with observation and is concerned with the generation of theory emerging from data. In contrast, a deductive approach starts with developing a hypothesis that derives from a theory, and ‘then designing a research strategy to test the hypothesis’ (ibid, 7). Blaikie (2007, 9) points out that the inductive strategy is more

appropriate for answering ‘what’ questions, while the deductive strategy is best suited for answering ‘why’ questions.

While it may seem that deductive and inductive research strategies are opposite approaches and therefore incompatible, Marsh and Stoker (1995) argue that they can be complementary and can be combined to maximise their strengths and minimise their weaknesses.

The next section will explain the appropriateness of using a combined approach for this research project.

3.1.2 How inductive and deductive research strategies will be applied to this research

This research project is based on a deductive approach with elements of induction used at different points of this study. Thus, it can be argued that this study adopts an integrated research strategy.

More specifically, as this project begins with the literature review, it involves identifying existing theories and patterns that point to using the deductive approach. However, this stage of research also involves gathering information based on which the research question is formulated and the theoretical starting point. This, in turn, points to the use of inductive strategy. The use of a deductive strategy is also evident in the theoretical framework chapter, where the researcher has presented and discussed a theory from which a hypothesis is derived. As evident in the subsequent chapters, this hypothesis was then tested against empirical findings in three different cases. Then again, the construction of generalisation at the end of this study points to the use of induction. As this project investigates the impact of US-Russian competition on the development of a common European energy security policy, where few or

no patterns have been previously established, drawing conclusions from the data collected was necessary.

3.1.3 Research Strategy within an epistemological and ontological perspective

The purpose of this section is to establish the ontological and epistemological standpoints for this research project. In terms of ontological choice, here the researcher adopts the perspective that 'there is an objective world out there and that we gain knowledge of that world through careful experimentation or case studies' (Ripsman, Taliaferro, Lobell, 2016, 105). More specifically, it is assumed that 'researchers can make contingent causal inferences about observable phenomena that can be verified through careful case research that follows the process-tracing method' (ibid).

While, by embracing the key elements of positivism the researcher adopts the view that theory testing is not only possible but also essential, she nonetheless, recognises that 'there are also limits to theory testing in the social sciences…that make hard positivism problematic' (ibid). The problems of human subjectivity and interpretation make the objective measurement of social phenomena complex and challenging. Thus, social scientists are

> compelled, either to rely upon the subjective reports of the subjects themselves – which may be deliberately or unconsciously incorrect – or to devise indirect methods of gauging their variables of interest, which may say more about how the researcher conceptualises the variables than the phenomenon under observation itself (ibid, 105).

While fully acknowledging all the difficulties which make theory testing in the social sciences more complex and less accurate than in the natural sciences, theory testing is still a fruitful endeavour. This is because, without theory testing, it would be impossible to verify or dismiss theories, thus 'we would have no ability to choose between theories to guide our behaviour and accumulate knowledge' (ibid, 106). This is why here the researcher subscribes to a soft-

positivist epistemology, ‘where we search for law-like generalisations across cases and test these generalisations with rigorous case-study analysis’, based on carefully selected cases (Ripsman, Taliaferro, Lobell, 2016, 106).

This method will allow the researcher to ‘identify elements of comparability’ across selected cases (ibid). One can then test the identifiable patterns by employing process-tracing analysis in order to evaluate the causal impact of the hypothesised independent and intervening variables on the dependent variables. According to Rispman et al., researchers could also make generalisations ‘based on patterns that are verified’ through meticulous investigation of the cases selected, to ‘inform predictions and generate policy relevant advice’ (ibid). However, bearing in mind the limitation of theory testing in the social sciences, researchers must maintain a healthy degree of scepticism in their findings.

Furthermore, due to the fact that the theories developed and tested in international relations are ‘probabilistic theories, they are not falsifiable and would not be’, even if one ‘could overcome the problems of social science theory testing’ discussed earlier (ibid, 107). Here, it is important to explain that the aim of a probabilistic theory is to explain as much of the dependent variable variance as possible with the independent variable and the intervening variable it identifies. A probabilistic theory does not claim to provide a hundred per cent explanation of that variance. It posits that ‘theory should hold *ceteris paribus*, but that other factors not enumerated in the theory may also affect outcomes’ (ibid). In that context, results that support the hypothesis developed cannot conclusively prove that it is correct or conclusively disprove it. For example, a single diverging case would not falsify the theory, as that does not necessarily imply that the theory is inadequate or that there is lack of influence of the independent and the intervening variable on the dependent variable. Instead, the diverging case could be a result of confounding variables or even a statistical error. A large number of cases that are consistent with the theory, similarly, would not constitute proof of that theory,

since the possibility that the results could be a product of the cases selected cannot be excluded. For this reason, it would be ‘more accurate to speak about confirming or disconfirming evidence’ (ibid).

Thus, despite the limitations of theory testing in social sciences, we assume that political scientists can test their theories and hypotheses against meticulously selected cases to evaluate their explanatory power. In general, strong theories are considered those that can demonstrate strong performance even when they ‘a priori appear more favourable to rival theoretical explanations’ (ibid). These theories, which ‘have confirming evidence from a broad range of observations or cases, can be said to have strong empirical support’ (ibid).

As was determined earlier, ontological and epistemological positions have direct implications for methodology. Having identified this project’s ontological position as a foundationalist and epistemological position as soft-positivist, the methodology selected will be qualitative.

3.2 Case Studies

A case study research design is adopted as the overarching research strategy for this project. While the researcher has adopted a general case study framework/research design, since every research project/ case is unique, she has adjusted it to the needs of the particular research.

The next part of this chapter will attempt to explain what a ‘case study’ research design is, and why it is suitable for this research project. It will then discuss the strengths and weaknesses of this approach and will present the case studies chosen for this project.

3.2.1 Case study research design

According to Creswell (2007, 73), ‘case study research involves the study of an issue explored through one or more cases’ within a bounded setting. However, scholars tend to disagree over whether case study research design is a research methodology or not. On the one hand, Stake (2005) suggests that case study research is not a methodology but rather a choice of what is to be studied within a bounded setting. On the other hand, other authors such as Denzin and Lincoln (2005), Merriam (1998) and Yin (2014) present it as a methodology. This study adopts Creswell’s (2007,73) view that case study research is ‘a methodology, a type of design in qualitative research, or an object of study, as well as a product of inquiry’.

More specifically, Creswell argues that case study research is ‘a qualitative approach’ in which the researcher investigates a ‘bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information’ (ibid). These include observation, interviews, audio-visual material, and documents and reports (ibid). By adopting a case study research design, one contributes to the understanding of a complex issue through a detailed contextual analysis of numerous events or conditions.

Yin (2009, 4) suggests that three conditions are useful for determining whether case study should be used as a research strategy. The first condition for determining which research method to use is the research question. Case studies, according to Yin (2009, 5), are appropriate when research ‘addresses either a descriptive question’ such as ‘What is happening or has happened’ or ‘an explanatory question’ such as ‘How or why did something happen?’ The second condition relates to the extent of control the researcher has over behavioural events while the third condition relates to the degree of focus on contemporary issues.

This research project was developed to answer the following research question: To what extent has great power competition affected the development of a common European energy security policy. At first glance, the research question appears to belong to the 'what extent' type of questions, which, according to Yin (2009) is more likely to favour survey methods or archival data analysis. However, a closer look reveals that the question is explanatory, as it deals with tracing of operational links among variables over time rather than describing frequencies or incidence (Yin, 2009).

When it comes to Yin's second condition, in this study the researcher did not have the ability to control or manipulate behavioural events. More specifically, there was no possibility of manipulating the behaviour of independent and intervening variables in order to examine the impact on the dependent variable. The researcher was external to the case.

Furthermore, the issue examined in this study is contemporary, thus meeting Yin's third condition for selecting a case study research strategy.

3.2.2 Strengths and weaknesses of case studies

A case study design is one of the most popular research designs in the fields of politics and international relations (Bebbett et al., 2007). This is because the use of a case study research strategy offers several advantages that make it suitable for this research project. However, a case study design has also weaknesses. The aim of this section is first to discuss the strengths and the weaknesses of using case studies and then to explain how this study attempts to overcome the possible shortcomings of this approach.

A case study research design is preferred when political scientists want to narrow down a very broad field of research into fewer researchable cases. It constitutes an in-depth study of

a particular research topic, and although it can generate both qualitative and quantitative data, it is usually most associated with qualitative methods.

According to Burnham (2008, 65-66), the attractiveness of case studies lies in that 'data on a wide range of variables can be collected on a single group, institution or policy area'. So, by adopting a case study research design, one contributes to the understanding of a complex issue through a detailed contextual analysis of numerous events or conditions. This, in turn, allows the researcher to 'argue convincingly about the relationship between the variables and present causal explanations for events and processes' (ibid, 66).

Furthermore, case study research design enables the researcher to apply a variety of methodologies and rely on a variety of sources to investigate a research problem, thus adding to the available knowledge that was acquired through previous studies.

However, the case study design has also some weaknesses. Yin (1994), one of the most prominent advocates of case study research, points out the following three. First, a small number of cases offer little basis for establishing reliability or allowing the generalisation of the findings, while the cases might not be representative of the larger problem being examined. Second, case studies are significantly time-consuming and can result in massive and unreadable texts. Finally, probably the most important disadvantage of case studies is that prolonged or intense exposure to the study of a particular phenomenon may bias the researcher's findings.

At this stage, it is important to note that experiments and surveys are not immune to these weaknesses. Thus, what matters here is not the research strategy adopted but rather the appropriate and fair design and presentation of the study. This study will be planned carefully in order to acknowledge and overcome any of the mentioned weaknesses.

The first weakness of case studies, the inability to generalise findings, has been one of the most serious weaknesses of case studies, as for many researchers, scientific generalisation seems to be the supreme aim of enquiry. This criticism, however, seems to be more often

directed towards single-case studies rather than multi-case studies. It is also important to mention that the same criticism could be made about experiments - as generalisations are rarely possible in single experiment studies.

However, according to Yin (2003), generalisation is not entirely impossible when using case studies. The author suggests that while case studies do not allow statistical generalisation, they do allow and aim for analytical generalisation. Similarly, Ripsman et al. point out that while broad generalisation might not be possible, it is still possible to generalise 'based on patterns that are verified through careful case-based analysis' with the aim 'to inform predictions and generate policy relevant advice' (Ripsman et al., 2016, 106). This view also finds Rhodes (1995) in agreement, who suggests that after using several case studies for theory testing, findings can be generalised to generate theories.

However, even if some generalisation is possible, it is not always the only value of a research project. Proponents of the case study design, such as Robert Stake, argue that a case study 'is defined by interest in an individual case, not by the methods of inquiry used', and that 'the object of study is a specific, unique, bounded system' (Stake, 2008, 443- 445). Thus, this form of research design aims at the in-depth analysis of complex and distinct phenomena of particular interests (Geertz, 1973).

The second alleged weakness of case studies is that they are often time-consuming and result in massive and unreadable texts. Undeniably, this is how case studies could be conducted; however, this is not how they are always done. According to Johnson, this 'criticism may stem from confusing a case study with a particular method of data collection, such as participant observation, which often required a long period of data collection' (Johnson et al., 2008, 202). According to the author, researchers should not disregard the case study research design due to this confusion.

The third criticism that refers to the potential of bias is relevant to both qualitative and quantitative studies. Despite the efforts of political scientists, research findings cannot be purely objective. This is because, in both qualitative and quantitative studies, research tools are developed by individuals. However, Yin acknowledges that case studies are more prone to bias and the problems experienced are less frequently dealt with successfully. Even so, since researchers are humans, they are exposed to social influences and thus filter information through their own worldview. Therefore, even in quantitative studies, there is no guarantee that the data was produced objectively. For example, researchers can develop questionnaires and surveys in ways that produce the desired results. The way to overcome this in case studies is to make sure that the researcher is aware of potential bias and has worked hard to ensure that the research process will not be affected by it.

3.2.3 Criteria for Judging the Quality of Research Design

As Yin (2009, 40) suggests, since a research design 'is supposed to represent a logical set of statements' it is possible to 'judge the quality of any given design according to certain logical tests'. The four tests of construct validity, internal validity, external validity and reliability are widely used to assess the quality of different research designs. Since case study research is also a type of research design, this study will engage with the four tests.

The construct validity test assesses how accurately the theoretical constructs represent the phenomenon under investigation. In other words, it shows whether the study is well operationalised. Research papers that lack construct of validity are likely to draw an incorrect conclusion from the study. Yin (2009, 42) suggests that in order for the study to meet this criterion, the researcher must specify the phenomenon under investigation and identify

operational measures that match the concepts. According to the author, using multiple sources of evidence also increases construct validity.

However, the construct validity test is not the only crucial test for the evaluation of case study research; the internal validity test is also important as it assesses the causal relationship of the variables under investigation, because changes might be caused by factors other than those studied. However, by eliminating the chances for confusion in a study, one can achieve higher internal validity. In order to meet the criterion of internal validity, Yin (2009) suggests the use of four analytical tactics. These include pattern matching, explanation building, consideration of rival perspectives and using logic models.

The third criterion, external validity that is establishing how generalisable the findings are, requires the careful selection of a sample which represents the phenomenon that is being studied in a wider context. Yin suggests that the use of replication logic in multiple cases can increase external validity (ibid).

Finally, to meet the reliability criterion, the researcher must demonstrate that the operation of the study can be repeated, achieving the same results. The goal here is to minimise bias and error in the study in order to ensure the reliability of the study. Therefore, the documentation of the research process is particularly important.

This study accounts for all of these criteria in planning and conducting of research. How this is done will be discussed in the operationalisation section of this chapter.

3.2.4 The case studies chosen for this research project

A range of possible case studies could have been used for this research project. Various factors have been considered in order to select the most appropriate for this study.

Firs, it was identified as necessary to use cases that cover different periods of time. More specifically, the three case studies undertaken in the context of this project cover the whole period between the early post-Cold War era and 2019. Covering different periods is particularly important as it allows repeated observations of the same variables over a long period of time, thus allowing for the generation of a wealth of data.

Second, it was identified as necessary to include cases that characterise the involvement of the US and Russia in European energy politics. This is because the cases selected must show focus on the research topic, so it does not become a haphazard collection of material about the case study. However, it was also decided that the cases should demonstrate a range of impact of great power competition on European energy politics. In other words, the cases used are broad in nature to allow the possibility of variation on the dependent variable. This approach allows examining the extent to which great power competition affected the development of a common European energy security policy. However, it also helps to avoid the probability of gathering supportive observations for the working hypothesis that can lead to the false assumption that the hypothesis is true.

Finally, it was identified as necessary to use multiple cases. This is because carefully selected multiple cases may provide a sound basis for analytical generalisation as they typically yield more robust findings than a single-case study.

Taking all of the above into consideration, the three cases selected for this research project are the following:

- Case Study No 1 – The Energy Union
- Case Study No 2 – The South Stream and Nord Stream I pipelines
- Case Study No 3 - The Nord Stream II pipeline

As stated earlier, the cases selected for this project cover the period between the early 1990s and 2019. However, earlier periods are also discussed to allow for a better understanding of the issues covered in this project.

The first case study, the case of Energy Union, is different from the other two cases. Although it seeks to answer the same research question, to what extent great power competition has affected the development of a common European energy security policy, it focuses exclusively on the EU level. It looks at the various stages of the development of a common European energy security policy by examining official EU documents.

The other two cases selected, the South Stream and Nord Stream I pipelines (Case Study No 2) and the Nord Stream II pipeline (Case Study No 3), are built around three different Russian pipeline projects. In Case Study No 2, the difference in the outcome of the two projects – Nord Stream I was successfully launched in 2011 but South Stream was cancelled in 2014, makes them ideal for use as separate case studies. However, as they cover more or less the same period of time, it was decided to merge these two cases into one case study. Examining the cases of the two pipelines in one case study has an advantage; it allows for an intra-case comparison. Case Study No 3, on Nord Stream II, deals with a pipeline project that is still under construction. These two cases studies offer the most extensive range of US and Russian involvement in European energy politics, which make them ideal for this research project. Also, a fair amount of academic literature and primary and secondary sources are available for conducting the research.

In sum, in order to answer the question, three different case studies will be examined. The main aim here is to provide three cases that represent different aspects, projects and stages of the development of the common European energy security strategy. The first case will investigate the role and impact of Great Power competition on the establishment of the idea of an Energy Union. Additionally, the choice of three pipeline cases that represent three projects

that took place at different times and resulted in different outcomes ensures that the cases have not been selected based on the dependent variable. The selected cases are also typical examples of the issues that decision-makers in the energy sector in Europe tend to deal with. In this context, the investigation of the above cases will enable the researcher to answer the research question.

3.3 Choice of methodology

The next two sections of this chapter will discuss and justify the methodologies selected for this research project. It will then try to explain why specific methodologies were not selected.

3.3.1 Methodology selected

As has been determined earlier, ontological and epistemological positions have direct implications for methodology. Having identified this project's ontological position as foundationalist and epistemology as soft-positivist, the methodology selected is qualitative.

While positivist epistemology is usually associated with quantitative methodology (Furlong and Marsh, 2010), soft-positivism allows the use of qualitative methods (Ripsman et al., 2016). Although here, the researcher can use both qualitative and quantitative methodology, quantitative methods have little to offer to this particular study due to the nature of the research question. Thus taking into consideration the nature of the phenomenon under investigation, qualitative methods are considered as the most appropriate research strategy.

Methods used for this research project include the review of primary source documents (main method) and the review of secondary sources.

Primary Documents

The primary method used in the particular research project is the review of primary source documents. These documents are produced by political actors, including executive and parliamentary arms of government, various policy-making and security agencies. According to Lowndes et al. (2018, 249), these documents tend to reflect the 'position of an actor and do not have analysis in them'. For this research project, the researcher has reviewed more than a hundred primary source documents, including:

- Declassified Central Intelligence Agency materials,
- Director of Central Intelligence Testimonies and Briefings,
- Congressional Research Service reports,
- US House of Representative Resolutions,
- US Senate Resolutions,
- Declassified Soviet documents,
- Energy Security Strategies of the Russian Federation up to 2020 & 2030,
- President of Russia News and Press Releases,
- National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation up to 2020,
- Governmental reports,
- Reports conducted by private intelligence agencies and think tanks,
- EU parliament reports, written questions and answers,
- Commission Strategic Reviews,
- National Energy Strategy documents of member states involved in the study,
- Policy documents of member states.

According to Lowndes et al. (2018, 249-250) 'the qualitative analysis of texts and primary source documents 'involves interception of social and political meaning from them, that is,

using them to “tell the story” or recreate a historical sequencing of events’. This story will enable the researcher to test the hypothesis and reach strong confirming or disconfirming evidence.

Other primary and secondary sources

In addition to primary sources documents, numerous other primary and secondary sources were used for this study. These include news reports, journal articles and books. News reports of events involving the phenomenon under investigation were used as supplementary to the analysis of primary source documents. Also, as evident in the literature review chapter, a fair amount of academic literature related to the topic has been used for this research project.

In summary, the methodologies selected for this study are generally qualitative as quantitative methods have little to offer to this study. As the use of interviews was not possible for this study, this research relies on the analysis of primary and secondary sources.

3.4 Ethical and legal issues

The next section of this chapter will discuss the ethical and legal considerations that were made when planning and undertaking this study.

3.4.1 Ethical considerations regarding methods

According to Traianou (2014, 68), the qualitative enquiry raises ethical issues as ‘it involves emergent and flexible research designs and usually entails collecting relatively unstructured data in naturalistic settings’. Most discussions about research ethics focus on how researchers should treat people they are studying or those from whom they obtain data (Hammersley,

2018). However, ethics in research can also relate to methods, procedures and even the subject under investigation. In this study, one main area where ethical principles must be acknowledged and accounted for in the research design is the use of documentary evidence. The next section will discuss and address the ethical concerns relevant to this research project.

3.4.2 Ethical and legal issues related to accessing and using documentary evidence

In historical and documentary research in political science, there is usually little direct interaction with those being researched, and researchers might fall into the temptation to overlook ethical issues. Researchers must take responsibility for keeping their research not only ethical but also legal.

When carrying out research, it is essential to respect the autonomy of the people involved in the study; at all times, they should maintain the right to make decisions about their lives. Therefore, the researcher has the ethical obligation to make any involved parties aware of any security risks and gain informed consent. However, there are some types of research where the requirement to gain informed consent does not apply. This is true when the study is based on the analysis of 'publicly available documents or of observations made in public settings' (Traianou, 2014, 64).

Informed consent should, however, be obtained when dealing with non-publicly available documents from the owners or keepers of these documents. Additionally, any documents containing confidential or sensitive material should be dealt with in a manner that ensures the anonymity of the parties involved, where this is required.

This study is primarily based on publicly available official documents and legislation. All documents produced by government and security agencies used for this research were either made immediately available to the public or were already declassified at the time the research

was conducted. As such, obtaining and using these documents was neither problematic nor illegal.

To conclude, University guidelines were followed at all times when conducting this study. All documents used for this research were obtained and used in accordance with the relevant legal requirements.

3.5 Operationalisation

This section will explain how theory and hypothesis will be tested against selected cases in order to evaluate their performance.

The previous chapter specified the Independent Variable (IDv), Intervening Variable (INv) and Dependent Variable (Dv) on two different levels of analysis in order to evaluate the causal impact of the specific hypothesised IDv and INv on the Dv.

Figure 5 The Two-Level Neoclassical Realist Model
Source: Created by the author.

For Level I, the Independent Variable is the change in Russia's relative power (through energy exports and the expansion of Russian energy infrastructure). The Intervening Variables

are the leaders' images and the strategic culture, while the dependent variable is the US-Russian foreign policy towards the EU member states.

For Level II, the independent variable is the incentives and pressures generated from the great power competition, the intervening variable is the leaders' images and strategic culture, while the dependent variable is the energy policy of EU member states.

In order to explain how states translate systemic incentives and threats into policy decisions, it is essential to briefly remind ourselves of the intervening variables (discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2) that determine how states respond to systemic pressure.

As explained in Chapter Two, although Neoclassical Realism focuses on four categories of intervening variables, leaders images, strategic culture, state-society relations and domestic institutions, only the two first are relevant to this study.

An initial assessment of relevant data showed that state-society relations and domestic institutions have little explanatory power when it comes to this particular research project. This is because the high stakes involved in making energy-related decisions makes other variables less important as they have fewer opportunities to influence decision-making than leaders' images or their impact is not as significant.

The initial assessment of data also showed that besides the leaders' images, strategic culture (the worldviews and the entrenched beliefs of the political elite and society) could also be relevant to this study as it can shed light on the behaviour of states. For this reason, this study will focus on two intervening variables: the leaders' images and the strategic culture. Table 4 shows the expected empirical evidence for each variable.

Level	Variable		Piece of Evidence
Level 1	IDv	Increase in Russia's power/influence	Official documents or FPE statements that show that Washington is worried over the increase in Russia's power
	INv	Leader's images Strategic Culture	Official documents or FPE statements that show how FPE translates systemic incentives and threats into specific policy decisions
	INv	Strategic culture (the worldviews and the entrenched beliefs of the political elite and society)	Official document, statements, literature that shows that historical experience/worldviews affect political's elite's & society's interpretation of the external environment
Level 1/ Level 2	DV/IDv	**US:** adopts measures to prevent the increase of Russian influence and power. **Russia:** adopts measures to increase its power and influence	* Official document, statements that show US efforts to limit Russian growing power/ influence * Official document, statements that show Russia efforts to increase its power/ influence * Official document, statements, literature that show that the competition between the US and Russia intensified
Level 2	INv	Leader's images	Official documents or FPE statements that show how FPE translates systemic incentives and threats into specific policy decisions
	INv	Strategic culture (the worldviews and the entrenched beliefs of the political elite and society)	Official document, statements, literature that shows that historical experience/worldviews affect political's elite's & society's interpretation of the external environment
	DV	MS energy policy/ EU energy policy	Evidence that shows that the US-Russian competition has affected energy security policy in the EU

Table 4 Variables and expected empirical evidence

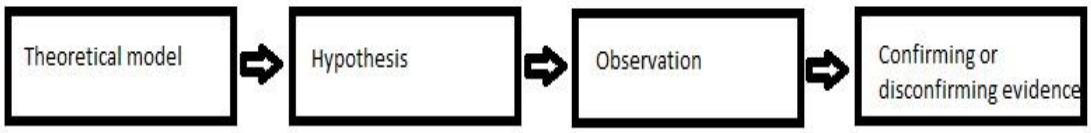
Source: Table created by the author.

Hypothesis

In order to evaluate the performance of the Two-Level Model in this study, the following hypothesis will be measured against empirical findings in the three case studies investigated in the thesis.

> *The more intense the competition between the US and Russia, the greater its impact on European energy security policy.*

The key aim is to reach confirming or disconfirming evidence that will help answer the central question of the thesis: *To what extent has great power competition affected the development of a common European energy security policy ?*



To make this possible, the next two sections will discuss how we measure the intensity of great power competition and define and measure impact.

Measuring the intensity of Great Power Competition

Great Power competition varies over time; it can intensify, remain the same, or be lessened. To determine whether the competition between Russia is intensifying, lessening or remaining the same over time, this study will examine the US-Russian relations in Chapter Four to identify variation in shared and incompatible interests between the early 1990s and 2019. An increase in cooperation and a decrease in clashes over incompatible interests will suggest that the competition between the US and Russia is lessening. The absence of significant changes in shared or incompatible interests indicates no changes in the intensity of great power competition. Finally, a decrease in cooperation between the two sides and an increase in the

occurrence of clashes over incompatible interests indicates of intensification of US-Russia competition (see Table 5).

Value	Indicators
Lessening	More shared interest /increase in cooperation and fewer incompatible interests compared to previous years
Remaining the same	No significant changes when it comes to shared (cooperation) or incompatible interests
Intensifying	Increase in occurrence of clashes over incompatible interests Fewer shared interests/ decrease in cooperation compared to previous years

Table 5 Intensity of great power competition

Source: Created by the author

Measuring Impact

Impact evaluations are a particular type of evaluation that seeks to answer cause-and-effect questions. More specifically, impact evaluations seek to answer the following question: What is the impact or causal effect of X on Y (outcome of interest)? In this study, we are interested in the impact of GP competition, that is, the effect that the US-Russian competition has caused on the development of European energy security policy (outcome of interests). An impact evaluation looks for the changes in the outcome that are attributable to the Great Power competition. In this study, we can expect the Great Power competition to delay, accelerate, or have no impact on the development of common European energy security policy.

3.6 Evidence and its use

The data used for this research was gathered through numerous primary and secondary sources. The information gathered was used to determine whether great power competition has affected the development of a common European energy security policy or not. If evidence gathered in any of the case studies indicates that great power competition has affected the development of energy security policy in the EU (delayed or accelerated), then this study can offer strong confirming evidence that this might be the case for that period of time the particular case study covers. However, if the evidence gathered points at no impact of great power competition on the development of a common European energy security policy, then this study can offer strong disconfirming evidence that this might be the case. At this stage, it must be noted that this study cannot speak in terms of certainty. As has been explained in an earlier section, due to the epistemological position of the researcher, the best this study can do is attempt to reach a plausible conclusion about the phenomenon under investigation and 'make plausible arguments consistent with the evidence' (Ripsman et al., 2016, 137).

Conclusion

The aim of this chapter has been to discuss the methodology adopted in this thesis to answer the research question. This is particularly important as it presents the researcher's approach to the specific topic and the method chosen to integrate the different components of the study in a logical way to ensure that the research question is effectively addressed. In this chapter, the researcher has also identified and acknowledged possible problems that may occur during the conduct of the research and addressed them accordingly to ensure that reliable methods have been used to produce reliable results.

Chapter Four - A Wider Perspective on US-Russian and EU-Russian Relations

The previous chapter discussed the methodology adopted in this research project, thus laying the foundations of the approach taken to answer the research question. However, before moving to the empirical chapters (chapters five and six), it is necessary to set the scene for this study. This is because this project deals with a complex research question that cannot be studied outside the historical context; therefore, it is essential to provide a wider perspective on how US-Russian and EU-Russian relations have evolved since the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Furthermore, as has been noted in chapter two (Theoretical Framework chapter), this study adopts the view that a country's historical experiences shape the country's strategic culture (the worldviews and the entrenched beliefs of its political elite and society), which in turn, can shape and constrain the foreign policy behaviour of states. This is particularly true in the cases of the US, Russia and European states. Thus, this chapter looks into the historical experiences of the actors involved in this study with the aim of improving our overall understanding of how these historical experiences, and as a result the strategic culture, have shaped their foreign policy behaviour.

This chapter consists of two parts. The first part focuses on US-Russian relations between the early 1990s and 2014 and concludes that despite fundamental changes, the rivalry between the US and Russia continued following the end of the Cold War. The second part examines the EU-Russian relations and demonstrates that despite the efforts made, low politics predominated in the EU-Russian partnership.

4.1 US-Russian relations in the post-Cold War era

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War, US-Russian relations have gone through different stages, cycling between periods of cooperation and confrontation. Even though the two countries managed to cooperate to maximise their shared interests in the areas of nuclear security, non-proliferation and counter-terrorism, the incompatibility of their primary national interests and the lack of trust has led to the re-emergence of a Cold War type of rivalry between them. On the one hand, developments such as the US-led war in Kosovo (1999), NATO expansions eastwards (2004 and 2007), the colour revolutions in 2003 and 2004, and the war in Georgia in 2008, and on the other hand, the centralisation of power in the Kremlin and the use of energy as political leverage (which the US tried to restrict) planted the seeds of mutual distrust between the two nations.

The fundamental changes at the end of the Cold War have transformed the international political system in many ways. Perhaps the most important of these changes - especially in the context of this research project - is America's consolidation of America-centric security architecture in Europe through the expansion of NATO and the non-inclusion of Russia, even though Russia was not the loser in the Cold War.

Today Russia is portrayed by many governmental and non-governmental Western sources as an aggressive and expansionist country and a threat not only to the Eastern European countries and the European project itself but also to the West in general. However, there is little discussion about what prompted Russia's anti-Western behaviour and triggered a new round of security competition. In this context, the next section will attempt to discuss the evolution of US-Russian relations and what led to a more assertive Russian foreign policy.

4.2 The Dominant Paradigm

There is no doubt that since the collapse of the Soviet Union, US-Russian relations have experienced ups and downs. More concretely, Lo identifies only 'three brief periods of relatively smooth engagement' between Russia and the US-led West: the immediate post-Soviet era, the era following 9/11, and the Obama Administration reset policy of 2009 (Lo, 2015a, 165). One would, therefore, infer that the rest of the time, the relationship between Washington and Moscow has been more confrontational than cooperative.

By 2015, however, US-Russian relations were worse than at any other time and highlights that 'although tensions ran very high during the Georgian war' in 2008, the 2014 annexation of Crimea, and developments in eastern Ukraine, had a far greater and longer-lasting impact on the relations between Washington and Moscow' (ibid). While Lo attributes the deterioration of the US-Russia relations in the post-Cold War era to ignorance, misperception and misunderstanding between the two countries, he clearly puts the responsibility of the failure of the 'reset' in the US-Russian relationship on Russia (Lo, 2015b).

Furthermore, adopting an America-centric view, Lo finds the Kremlin's obsession with broken promises on NATO enlargement as a poor justification for Russia's assertive foreign policy. In fact, he expresses the view that irrespective of what Baker promised to Gorbachev about NATO enlargement back in time, 'the world has moved on' and so should Russia (Lo, 2015b). However, this view misses the point that it was the West's broken promises on NATO expansion that planted the seeds of mistrust in the Kremlin, thus leading to the realisation in Moscow that the world is a harsh place where the stronger prevails and the weak get beaten.

Similarly, Kuchins agrees that it was the Ukrainian crisis that brought US-Russian relations to their lowest point since the end of the Cold War (Kuchins, 2015). The author also concurs with the view that Moscow and Washington can cooperate on issues of common

interest, but he inclines towards the assertion that ‘the fundamental mismatch in strategic outlooks always cast[s] a shadow over their relationship’ and constrains ‘its growth into something deeper and more trusting’ (ibid, 121).

When it comes to NATO expansion, it is clear that Kuchins picked up the fact that the Clinton Administration seized the opportunity to open the doors of NATO to the ex-Soviet States since ‘there was nothing Russia could do to stop it’. He also acknowledged that the US would ‘never have gone to war over Kosovo if it believed the Russian Federation had the capacity to vigorously contest the policy beyond rhetorical fulmination’ (ibid). However, the author failed to recognise that the Kremlin’s distrust of the West’s policies and Moscow’s aggressive policy towards the West stems from exactly these historical events. The second round of NATO enlargement and the US unilateral withdrawal from the ABM treaty only reconfirmed what had already been known to Moscow at that time: that the West had no intention of respecting Russian interests and could not be trusted.

According to Tsygankov, Russia and the United States tend to cooperate in areas of shared interests such as solving issues of nuclear proliferation, coordinating numerous anti-terrorist activities and working together to ensure that Iran and North Korea will halt plans for the production of nuclear bombs. However, the author highlights that despite ‘these positive developments’, tensions between Washington and Moscow have increased dramatically due to disagreements over ‘at least five issues’ (Tsygankov, 2016, 191). The author suggests that these are ‘Iran, arms sales abroad, China, energy resources, and the expansion of American military infrastructure towards Russia’s borders’ (ibid, 191-192).

When it comes to the fifth ‘issue’, Tsygankov points out that NATO enlargements eastwards – both first and second round - were interpreted in Moscow as the most serious foreign policy challenges. Similarly, he suggests that the West-backed coloured revolutions in Russia’s backyard ‘have been viewed as destabilising by Russia and directed against the

Kremlin's power and security' (ibid, 2016, 178). However, while acknowledging the above, Tsygankov fails to demonstrate that the post-Cold War era rivalry between the US and Russia and Russia's aggressiveness towards the West were, to a great extent, the result of mistrust that arose out of these developments.

In a very interesting publication, titled *Russian and US National Interests: Why should Americans Care?*, and dated 2011, Allison, Blackwill, Simes and Saunders, former senior US officials, identify five vital American interests that show that the US and Russia share interests while at the same time their interests diverge in many areas.

US vital National Interest	Russia's vital National Interests
Prevent the use and the spread of nuclear weapons, weapons of mass destruction, securing nuclear weapons and materials, and preventing the proliferation of intermediate and long-range delivery systems for nuclear weapons.	Prevent the use of nuclear weapons, weapons of mass destruction against Russia and the proliferation of nuclear weapons and delivery systems in the post-Soviet space.
Maintain a balance of power in Europe and Asia that promotes peace and stability with a continuing US leadership role.	Maintain Russia's nuclear deterrent capability as a guarantor of Russia's sovereignty and great power status.
Prevent large-scale or sustained terrorist attacks on the American Homeland.	Prevent major terrorist attacks in Russia.
Ensure energy security.	Sustain Russian influence in the post-Soviet space and prevent competing powers or alliances from dominating the post-Soviet space.
Assure the stability of the international economy.	Ensure continued revenue flows from Russia's energy exports and that other states are not able to exercise leverage over Russia's energy exports.
	Protect the security and stability of Russia's current political system
	Protect and advance the economic interests of major political-business alliances within Russia's elite.

Table 6 The US and Russian vital National Interests

Source: Table created according to information in Allison et al. (2011)

A close look at Table 6 indeed demonstrates that US and Russian interests 'overlap in several areas' such as the 'shared desire to avoid nuclear war, prevent proliferation and limit terrorism' (Allison et al., 2011, 17). However, US and Russian national interests clash when it comes to the 'post-Soviet space', the 'commitment of Russia's leaders to maintaining their country's current system of government' and 'to protecting the economic interests of groups in the Russian elite' (ibid). Considering the shared and clashing US and Russian national interests, Allison et al. suggest that Moscow should be a priority for Washington as its choices and actions directly affect vital US national interest in a way that not many other nations do (ibid).

To conclude, the dominant paradigm in the study of US-Russian relations either tends to place the whole responsibility for the failure of US-Russian relations on Russia or underestimates the impact that the United States policies have had on the development of a more assertive Russian approach towards the West. Therefore, the next section will discuss an alternative perspective on US-Russian relations between 1991-2019; a far less America-centric perspective, that will allow the reader to gain a more nuanced understanding of how the developments in the post-Cold war era have trapped the US and Russia in a new cycle of great power competition. Without understanding how these developments have shaped US-Russian relations, it will be impossible to understand the interest and role of the United States in the EU-Russian energy partnership and thus impossible to explain the impact of the great power competition on European energy politics.

4.2.1 The collapse of the Soviet Union

When Gorbachev assumed power in 1985, he introduced a series of changes in his country that he saw as necessary for the Soviet Union. More specifically, he aimed to carry out a 'root-and branch reform of the entire Soviet system, including its relations with the West' (Lightbody,

2005, 112). However, instead of reviving the Soviet Union, the unintended effects of 'Glasnost' and 'Perestroika', led to the collapse of the empire. For his part, his successor, Boris Yeltsin 'radicalised and stepped up the attack on the Soviet system, advocating rapid movement toward a market economy and widespread democratisation' (Graham, 1999a). Graham finds that while Gorbachev's and Yeltsin's policies could have a positive effect on Russia in the long-term, he admits that back then they could only have accelerated the decline (Graham, 1999b).

By 1999, the Foreign Policy Executive in the US was aware of 'how profound this decline has been' and in particular, 'how devastating it has been to Russians' psyches' (ibid). By this time, Moscow saw one East European country after another becoming independent in the space of several months in 1989 (Pop, 2013; Brown, 2010; Graham 1999b). This had some far-reaching consequences affecting the Soviet policy in several ways. First of all, it deprived the Warsaw Pact and the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) of their *raison d' être* which eventually led to their dissolution on July 1, 1991 (Pop 2013). The breakup of the Soviet empire entailed the loss of half of its population and perhaps most importantly, 'a quarter of the territory it once controlled overnight' (Graham, 1999b). The decline of the Soviet power was also evident in the failure of the Red Army, once the pride of the Soviet empire, to put down an insurrection in the republic of Chechnya (ibid).

Although policymakers in the US were delighted to see the decline of Soviet power, Washington was fearful of the consequences this would have. As a result, several meetings were held between the leaderships of the two countries to discuss how this could be avoided.

4.2.2 Early post-Soviet era: George H.W. Bush and Boris Yeltsin

In one of these meetings at Camp David, on February 1, 1992, a Joint Declaration was issued by President Bush and President Yeltsin, announcing the end of the Cold War for the two

countries. The two leaders agreed on the following principles that were to guide US-Russian relations:

I. Russia and the United States do not regard each other as potential adversaries. From now on, the relationship will be characterised by friendship and partnership founded on mutual trust and respect and a common commitment to democracy and economic freedom.
II. We will work to remove any remnants of Cold War hostility, including taking steps to reduce our strategic arsenals.
III. We will do all we can to promote the mutual well-being of our peoples and to expand as widely as possible the ties that now bind our peoples. Openness and tolerance should be the hallmark of relations between our peoples and governments.
IV. We will actively promote free trade, investment, and economic cooperation between our two countries.
V. We will make every effort to support the promotion of our shared values of democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights, including minority rights, respect for borders and peaceful change around the globe.
VI. We will work actively together to: Prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and associated technology, and curb the spread of advanced conventional arms on the basis of principles to be agreed upon; settle regional conflicts peacefully; and counter terrorism, halt drug trafficking and forestall environmental degradation. (New York Times, 1992)

These principles signalled a new era in the relations between the two nations. The same year, in June, President Yeltsin paid a state visit to Washington, where he and President Bush agreed to continue the START talks (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty). Talks for strategic arms reduction had started in 1982, and after years of negotiations, the Treaty on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (START I) was signed on July 31, 1991, by Presidents Bush and Gorbachev.

In this new era, Russia had to go through tough economic reforms and a democratisation process. The new government, formed under President Boris Yeltsin, pushed for radical economic reforms in Russia, to transform the socialist economy into a market economy. These reforms, also known as ‘shock therapy’, led Russia into a profound economic crisis. The industrial base collapsed following the collapse of the Soviet Union, which in turn led to a dramatic shrinking of the economy. In 1999, the Russian Gross National Product (GNP) was about one-quarter of the Soviet GNP. Russia fell in absolute GNP from being number three in

the world in 1987 to number 15 by 1996. The country's economy was behind India and South Korea, while countries like Croatia and Peru had a higher GNP than Russia at that time (Graham, 1999a).

The Bush Administration was heavily criticised for watching Russia fall into chaos and doing nothing (Rutland and Dubinsky, 2012). In response to this, the US President announced a $24 billion international aid package to encourage market reforms, the democratisation process and most importantly, to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) (Nichol, 2014). However, Rutland and Dubinsky highlight that 'most of that was money already committed in the form of postponement of Soviet-era debts' as according to the US administration 'Russia was too unstable to make use of any serious influx of new funds' (ibid, 242). While the Bush Administration was preoccupied with foreign policy, the focus of the next US Administration was transforming Russia into a market democracy.

4.2.3 Early post-Soviet era: William Jefferson Clinton and Boris Yeltsin

Bill Clinton, who took office in 1993, was convinced that it was in Washington's interests 'to ensure that Russia became a democracy', since it was a common belief at that time that 'democracies do not go to war with each other' (Rutland and Dubinsky, 2012, 242). The newly elected American President appeared to like Boris Yeltsin and support his reforms, especially those that aimed at transforming Russia into a market democracy. After all, 'Yeltsin was the only horse the forces of reform had' as Talbot, the Deputy Secretary of State from 1993-2000, has admitted (Goldgeier, McFaul, 2003, 125).

Yeltsin seemed to be committed to radical reforms at any cost, and the US administration was convinced that Moscow was making 'steady, albeit at times slow progress in economic reform and democratisation' (Graham, 1999b). However, the 1993 attacks that

Yeltsin ordered against his foes in the Parliament, in the middle of a dramatic executive-legislative conflict, left no doubts 'that Russia's transition to liberal democracy and a market economy would be far more problematic than Washington expected' (Wallander, 2003, 307). Despite these developments in Russia and Yeltsin's use of military force to seize control of the Russian 'White House', the Clinton Administration continued to support the Russian President, as 'keeping communists out of the Kremlin trumped all other concerns' (Goldgeier and McFaul, 2003, 144). In that context, Clinton justified Yeltsin's actions by stating that he had 'no other alternative but to try to restore order' (ibid, 2003).

In general, Russia's transition to democracy and the market economy was the centrepiece of the Clinton Administration, and Yeltsin was seen as not only Russia's but also as America's best hope for pushing for the necessary reforms. At the same time, both leaders affirmed their commitment to the establishment of 'a dynamic and effective Russo-American partnership' (Rutland and Dubinsky, 2012, 243). Footage of a joint press conference in Hyde Park, New York, on October 23, 1995, demonstrates that US-Russian relationship was much warmer than many expected. While heavily drunk during the press conference, President Yeltsin stated that:

> our partnership is strong and not calculated for one year or five years, but for years and years to come, tens of years, for a century. And we are friends. And only together we are going to be trying to solve not only our joint bilateral issues but issues affecting the whole world.

This statement demonstrates that Russians, in this new era, had high expectations of their partnership with the US. The end of communism was expected to bring an end to the hostility between the two countries and enable them to establish a strong strategic partnership that was to last for years. Furthermore, from Yeltsin's suggestion that together the US and Russia would be trying to solve global issues, one can conclude that at that time the Russian President still viewed Russia as a great power that had a right to a say in world affairs. It is

clear that Yeltsin at that time naively thought that Russia could be an equal partner of the United States. Perhaps this was because Clinton nodded his head positively to everything Yeltsin stated (Clinton – Yeltsin joint press conference in Hyde Park, N.Y., on Oct. 23, 1995).

Despite being aware of the fact that Yeltsin was an alcoholic, Clinton was of the view that 'Yeltsin drunk is better than most of the alternatives sober' (Dumbrell, 2009, 100). In that context, neither the 'suspected irregularities in the conduct of the subsequent constitutional referendum', nor 'the disastrous war in Chechnya' discouraged Yeltsin's American counterparts from supporting him. In fact, Washington put a great deal of effort into making sure that when Yeltsin confronted a strong challenge from Communist Party leader Gennady Zyuganov during the critical Russian presidential elections of 1996, he would have the necessary support to win this election (Piet and Kanet, 2016, 57). Rutland and Dubinsky wisely point out that a communist victory in that election, or even the cancellation of the election, would 'have been the end of the road for Clinton's democratic transition paradigm' (Rutland and Dubinsky, 2012, 244).

To prevent a communist victory, 'a $10 million IMF loan was dispatched to pay off wage and pension arrears' while at the same time US campaign advisors 'were secretly flown into Moscow to advise Yeltsin's election team' (Piet and Kanet, 2016, 57). More concretely, according to Time magazine, 'four US advisers used polls, focus groups, negative ads and all the other techniques of American campaigning to help Boris Yeltsin win' (Kramer, 1996, 28). At the same time, 'a massive anti-communist media campaign was financed by contributions from Russia's oligarchs in exchange for the transfer of vast public resources into their hands' (Piet and Kanet, 2016, 57).

In order to understand what difference the American meddling made to the results of the 1996 Presidential elections, one only has to consider that Yeltsin's victory was so unexpected, that earlier that year, 'many of his advisors urged him to cancel the elections'

(Rutland and Dubinsky, 2012, 244). With the ongoing war in Chechnya, the Russian economy in decline between 1991 and 1996, which meant decreases in GNP and wages, and increases in corruption and crime, Yeltsin was so unpopular that a commentator of the Russian broadsheet newspaper Pravda wrote:

> Logically, he should have lost, since he was unable to fully solve any of the problems that have piled up: the stagnation of production, the impoverishment of a majority of the people, growing unemployment, the chronic non-payment of wages, the decline in science, culture and education, the continuing conflict in Chechnya, etc. Nevertheless, Yeltsin received a majority of the electorate's votes (Mason and Sidorenko-Stephenson, 1997, 698).

In exchange for America's support, Dmitri Simes, President of the Nixon Institute, pointed out that the 'Clinton administration officials expected the Kremlin to accept the United States' definition of Russia's national interests' (Rutland and Dubinsky, 2012, 243). Gvosdev and Marsh (2014, 81) point out that 'trying to bring Russian foreign policy into conformity with the US preferences was jokingly labelled as 'the spinach treatment' by Talbott's aide, Victoria Nuland, who likened the process to trying to convince children to eat healthy food. Many Russians later blamed the United States for pushing for reforms in the country that led to economic chaos and created conditions that encouraged corrupt practices and the rise of the oligarchs (ibid).

In general, until 1996, Washington's preferences were accommodated by the Atlanticists, who dominated the Russian government and strongly supported Russia's 'turn to the West' (Gvosdev and Marsh, 2014, 83). However, the appointment of Yevgeny Primakov as Foreign Minister in 1996 and as Prime Minister in 1998 changed the tenor of the US-Russia relations (ibid). Although Primakov was not hostile to the idea of US-Russian partnership, Gvosdev and Marsh point out that he viewed Russian-American relations as 'essentially and eternally a zero-sum game' and therefore sought to restrict the American influence and promote domestic Russian interests (ibid).

Several developments in the coming years further weakened the Moscow-Washington partnership. The most important were: Washington's determination to prevent Russia from regaining any sort of influence in the post-Soviet space, the expansion of NATO eastwards, US efforts to develop energy and trade routes that bypassed Russia, and the push for free-market reforms in Russia and the post-Soviet space (Gvosdev and Marsh 2014).

4.2.4 NATO enlargement: Broken Promises

According to Rutland and Dubinsky (2012), the main problem in America-Russian relations in the post-Cold War era was the US plans to expand NATO eastwards. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, the Russians argued that NATO, established in 1949 to contain the Soviet threat in Europe, had no purpose of existence anymore, and therefore should be abolished. Washington cut 300,000 troops stationed in Europe following Yeltsin's withdrawal of troops from the Baltic countries and Eastern Europe; however, it refused to dismantle what was regarded as a highly successful organisation (Sakwa, 2017a).

The collapse of the Soviet Union 'encouraged the view that containment had been responsible for what was interpreted as a victory of the West'; therefore, it is hardly surprising that the West did not wish to abolish NATO (ibid, 78). Not 'only had the opponent collapsed but the continuer-state proclaimed its commitment to the very values that had underpinned the Western alliance' (ibid). While this, indeed, looked like a victory of the West, Sakwa presents an interesting argument here. He suggests that '...it was precisely at this point that seeds were planted for later conflict' (ibid). Instead of creating a new universal security system for Europe, the 'dominance of the Western security system was consolidated on a selective and exclusive basis' (ibid)

Not only had NATO stayed on, but it had embarked on a policy of expansion eastwards, admitting new members that were previously part of the Warsaw Pact. Putin's address to the Russian Parliament in 2014 following the annexation of Crimea about the West's broken promises, including that of NATO's non-enlargement, fuelled an academic debate on NATO enlargement myths and realities. As a result, there has been a great deal of discussion on whether the West broke its promise to Moscow that NATO would not expand eastward.

The claim about broken promises gained further support following the publication of Blanton and Savranskaya's (2017) work, titled *NATO Expansion: What Gorbachev Heard.* In their work, the authors refer to a Memorandum of conversation between the US Secretary of State James Baker and the Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze. This Memorandum reveals that while making a case for Germany's accession to a 'changed NATO' Baker clarified to his counterpart that by a 'changed NATO' he meant a 'NATO that is far less a military organisation, much more of a political one' (US Department of State, FOIA 199504567, 3). The document also reveals that Baker stated that there 'would, of course, have to be iron-clad guarantees that NATO's jurisdiction or forces would not move eastward' (ibid).

Furthermore, a record of the conversation between Mikhail Gorbachev and James Baker in Moscow also demonstrates that commitments were made about NATO's non-expansion beyond Germany. More concretely, during a visit to Moscow on February 9, 1990, Baker reassured Gorbachev that they 'understand that not only for the Soviet Union but for the other European countries as well, it is important to have guarantees that if the United States keeps its presence in Germany within the framework of NATO, not an inch of NATO's present military jurisdiction will spread in an eastern direction' (Savranskaya and Tom Blanton, 2017).

However, NATO's official position is that the records and archival materials that were declassified 'do not change the fundamental conclusion that there have never been political or legally binding commitments by the West, not to expand NATO beyond the borders of a unified

Germany' (NATO, 2018). Interestingly, however, just a few lines below, in the same text, it admits that the Soviet Union agreed to a united Germany remaining in NATO, following 'countless personal conversations in which Gorbachev and other Soviet leaders were assured that the West would not take advantage of the Soviet Union's weakness and willingness to withdraw militarily from Central and Eastern Europe' (NATO, 2018). The same source suggests that these conversations may have left some Soviet politicians with the impression that NATO enlargement, which started with the admission of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland in 1999, had been a breach of these Western commitments' (NATO, 2018). Nevertheless, the article insists that 'these statements were made in the context of the negotiations on German reunification, and the Soviet interlocutors never specified their concerns' and 'the issue was never raised' (NATO, 2018).

Indeed, while a legally binding agreement was never signed, one cannot turn a blind eye to the fact that Baker's statements, first of all, provide clear evidence that Washington assured Soviet officials that NATO would be transformed to a less military and more political type of organisation – a promise not kept. Second, despite NATO's claims, a careful examination of these documents demonstrates that while fully aware of Soviet concerns, the US Secretary of State promised Gorbachev that NATO would not expand eastward – another promise broken. As a result, one can conclude that, when Gorbachev agreed in 1990 to the reunification of Germany and its NATO membership, he 'made the decision based on assurances' given by his Western counterparts that 'in return NATO would never expand 'one inch eastward' toward Russia' (Cohen, 2018). Other studies also support the view that the commitments for NATO's non-expansion eastward concerned the post-Soviet space and not only Germany (Sarotte, 2014).

While political scientists and experts have focused on 'misperceptions created by the 1990 meetings', Goldgeier argues that 'more important to the bad blood that emerged in the

mid-1990s over NATO's enlargement were the misperceptions resulting from meetings among Clinton, Yeltsin, and their closest aides' (Goldgeier, 2016). The author suggests that 'encapsulating all of the ambiguities of that period more than any other meeting, was a conversation that took place in Moscow in October 1993' (ibid). According to Goldgeier, Warren Christopher, US Secretary of State, had to explain during the meeting that the United States would not support the admittance of new members to NATO at the January 1994 NATO summit. Instead, to the relief and satisfaction of the Russian President, he said that the plan was to develop a Partnership for Peace (PfP) that could potentially include all former Warsaw Pact states (ibid). In his memoir, Warren recalls that

> Yeltsin became quite animated when I described the Partnership proposal...He called the Partnership idea a "stroke of genius", saying it would dissipate Russian tensions regarding the East Europeans and their aspirations toward NATO.... "This really is a great idea, really great," Yeltsin said enthusiastically. "Tell Bill that I am thrilled by this brilliant stroke". In retrospect, it is clear, that his enthusiasm was based upon his mistaken assumption that the Partnership for Peace would not lead to eventual NATO expansion (Goldgeier, 1999, 59).

In other words, Yeltsin was deliberately left with the impression that the Partnership for Peace would be extended to all European countries, including Russia and most importantly, that the PfP was an alternative to NATO expansion (Savranskaya and Blanton, 2018). It soon became clear to the Yeltsin Administration, however, that they had 'either misunderstood or been misled' (Breslauer, 2002, 191). While Russia did join the PfP in June 1993, the problems for Yeltsin started when the Eastern European countries pressed for full NATO membership.

Rutland and Dubinsky argue that it was the 'first-place finish of the semi-fascist Liberal Democratic party, led by Vladimir Zhirinovsky, in the State Duma elections in December 1993' that 'prompted Clinton to approve NATO enlargement in Prague in January 1994' (Rutland and Dubinsky, 2012, 245). The decision was not welcomed in Moscow. In December 1994, Yeltsin denounced the NATO enlargement plans and warned that 'Europe, not having yet freed itself from the heritage of the Cold War, is in danger of plunging into a cold peace' (Williams,

1994). The Russian President said sarcastically that 'We hear explanations to the effect that this is allegedly the expansion of stability, just in case there are undesirable developments in Russia', and added that 'if the objective is to bring NATO up to Russia's borders, let me say one thing: It is too early to bury a democratic Russia' (Kempster and Murphy, 1994).

In May 1995, during a meeting with President Clinton, in Moscow, Yeltsin repeated his concerns

> I see nothing but humiliation for Russia if you proceed… Why do you want to do this? We need a new structure for Pan-European security, not old ones! But for me to agree to the borders of NATO expanding towards those of Russia — that would constitute a betrayal on my part of the Russian people (Savranskaya and Blanton, 2018).

While the West was warned that NATO enlargement would provoke a backlash against Russia's Westernizers, making the transition to democracy more difficult, US officials were determined to seize the opportunity, 'to hedge against a future Russian revival' (Sakwa, 2017a, 80). However, Clinton delayed NATO expansion until after the Russian Presidential election in June 1996.

Rutland and Dubinsky quote the US President saying at a meeting in Helsinki, nearly a year later, in March 1997 that

> I told Yeltsin that if he would agree to NATO expansion and the NATO-Russian partnership, I would make a commitment not to station troops or missiles in the new member countries prematurely, and to support Russian membership in the new G-8, the World Trade Organization, and other international organisations. We had a deal (Rutland and Dubinsky, 2012, 245).

However, the White House transcript demonstrates that the two leaders did not agree on NATO expansion. At the news conference at the Helsinki summit on March 21, 1997, Boris Yeltsin stated that 'We believe that the eastward expansion of NATO is a mistake and a serious one at that. Nevertheless, in order to minimise the negative consequences for Russia, we decided to sign an agreement with NATO, a Russia-NATO agreement' (White House, 1997). Clearly, due to Russia's weakness at that time, Yeltsin could disagree with US decisions and

complain, but do nothing to stop the expansion. In other words, the 'Kremlin... was powerless to stop the alliance, and tried to make the best of a bad situation' (Rutland and Dubinsky, 2012, 246).

As a result, in July 1997, at NATO's Madrid summit, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Poland were invited to join the North Atlantic Organization. On October 8, 1997, Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright, who replaced Warren Christopher, appeared at the hearings of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in an effort to 'win approval by early next year' for the three countries' entry to NATO (New York Times, 1997). The cost of expansion was estimated at $35 billion over 13 years, with the United States contributing $2 billion. NATO defence ministers expressed their concerns over paying $16 billion or possibly more for NATO expansion at a time when there was no visible military threat, and European countries were adopting austerity measures (Mitchell, 1997). However, the US Secretary of State said at the hearing that she expected prospective members would pay their share and reassured the committee that she would insist that US allies 'share this burden fairly' (Mitchell, 1997).

Senator Jesse Helms, the chairman of the committee, expressed the view that the eastern expansion was a 'historic opportunity to right the wrong of Yalta when the World War victors met in the Crimea and divided Europe into Soviet and Western-dominated spheres' (Mitchell, 1998). At the same time, Senator Joseph Biden stated that NATO expansion was in the United States' 'best security interests' (Mitchell, 1997).

Not everyone, however, thought that NATO enlargement was in America's best interests. In June 1997, an open letter was sent to President Clinton by fifty former senior US statesmen (senators, cabinet secretaries, ambassadors and arms control and foreign policy experts) expressing the view that NATO expansion is 'a policy error of historic importance', as it would lead to

> Strengthening of the non-democratic opposition, undercut those who favour reform and cooperation with the West, bring the Russians to question the entire post-Cold War settlement, and galvanise resistance in the Duma to the START II and III treaties;

Whilst,

> In Europe, NATO expansion will draw a new line of division between the "ins" and the "outs", foster instability, and ultimately diminish the sense of security of those countries which are not included.

The statesmen closed the letter, stating that

> Russia does not now pose a threat to its western neighbours and the nations of Central and Eastern Europe are not in danger. For this reason, and the others cited above, we believe that NATO expansion is neither necessary nor desirable and that this ill-conceived policy can and should be put on hold (Opposition to NATO expansion, 1997).

Despite the warnings, NATO expansion was approved by the Senate in April 1998 which allowed the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary to join the alliance on March 12, 1999.

Sakwa highlights that it was the 'security concerns of the Eastern European countries that became the driving force for enlargement' and notes that 'these concerns were a function of the larger failure to create a mutually satisfactory and inclusive post-Cold War security order' (2017, 82). Furthermore, he takes a step further, arguing that not only had the US 'discouraged a separate European defence identity', but Washington also excluded Russia 'from the peace settlement when it was not even a defeated party but actually one of the victors over the Communist Soviet Union' (ibid).

As a result of these developments, Yeltsin's hopes of becoming an equal partner of the United States were further weakened. In fact, Russia became and has remained ever since 'quite suspicious of US intentions' as Washington policies appeared to work against what the Kremlin sees as its 'legitimate political, security and economic interests' (Gvosdev and Marsh, 2014, 83).

4.2.5 Kosovo Intervention

Two weeks after the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary joined NATO, the US-led alliance started bombing Yugoslavia in response to Belgrade's attempts to 'suppress the secessionist campaign by the Albanian majority in Kosovo' (Carpenter, 2008). The West wanted President Slobodan Milošević to relinquish control of the province to international peacekeepers in order to halt the violence. Completely ignoring Moscow's strong historical and cultural ties with the Serbs, Washington's decision to use military force against Belgrade met strong opposition from the Kremlin. However, there was another reason why the precedent of using military force against Yugoslavia was highly problematic for Russia; Moscow was also facing a separatist rebellion in Chechnya. Thus, despite assurances from Samuel Berger, the US National Security advisor, that Washington's air campaign against Serbia would not affect Moscow-Washington relations, NATO's operation in Kosovo soon became one of the most severe tests for US-Russian relations in the post-Cold War era (Gvosdev and Marsh, 2014).

Despite strong objections, Moscow had limited options in countering NATO's airstrikes (Simes, 1998). Hicks et al. (2017) identify two reasons for this limitation: first, Russia was still dependent on the West's financial assistance and second, the country's conventional military capabilities were inferior to that of the alliance. Considering its weaknesses, 'there were limits to how far the Kremlin was prepared to go to defend Milošević' (ibid, 28).

Thus, Moscow pursued a diplomatic approach, insisting that there should be no intervention without the approval of the United Nations Security Council. According to Hicks et al., in the Contact Group, the principal group of nations that monitored the developments in Kosovo, 'Russian officials pressed a four-part agenda: (1) no NATO military operation in Serbia; (2) no independent Kosovo; (3) no escalation of sanctions against Yugoslavia: and (4) reestablishment of Kosovo's autonomy (the latter condition putting Moscow at odds with

Belgrade)' (ibid, 29). However, by March 1999, it became clear that negotiations within the Contact Group could not prevent the escalation of the crisis. According to Hicks et al., by that time, the 'previous ceasefire arrangements were unravelling and NATO had confirmation that Yugoslav forces were conducting a systematic campaign to ethnically cleanse Kosovo... [and in that context it] was decided that intervention was necessary' (ibid, 29).

In the last effort to find a diplomatic solution, Prime Minister Primakov took off for Washington for high-level talks. While flying to Washington he was informed that President Clinton had announced airstrikes against Yugoslavia, and in a symbolic step, he ordered his aircraft to turn around halfway across the Atlantic and to return to Moscow. In response to NATO's bombing operation, the Duma unanimously condemned the operation and postponed its vote on the ratification of the US-Russia bilateral START II treaty (Bluth, 2000). From the Kremlin's perspective, Washington 'was using brute force to advance its political agenda' (Rutland and Dubinsky, 2012, 246).

When Milošević finally agreed to withdraw forces from Kosovo, the US-led NATO put efforts into including Moscow in the follow-on peacekeeping operation. However, according to western sources, the alliance was 'unwilling to cede to Russia the leading role' which the Kremlin desired. Russia, which earlier had played an important role in convincing Milošević to end the war, demanded to police their own sector, preferably in the north of the country where the Serbian minority were most heavily concentrated, independent of NATO (Bideleux and Jeffries, 2007). However, according to Hicks et al. (2017), NATO's refusal to allocate Russia a sector of its own prompted President Yeltsin to order 200 Russian troops stationed in Bosnia to occupy Pristina International Airport on June 12, ahead of NATO's KFOR peacekeepers. An armed clash between the US and Russia was narrowly avoided only thanks to the British commander of KFOR, who refused an order to start what he thought might escalate into World War III (Cordesman, 2001).

While this move demonstrated Moscow's willingness to act in defence of its interests, Russia's conventional forces were incapable of preventing both NATO's air campaign and the 'West's readiness to use force and redraw borders without authorisation from the UN Security Council' (Hicks et al., 2017, 29). Thus, the Kremlin's Pristina operation can be interpreted as an unsuccessful attempt to salvage Russia's prestige (ibid).

4.2.6 George W. Bush- Vladimir Putin: *A new era in US-Russian relations*

When George Bush took office in January 2001, he made a clear break with Clinton's Russia policy. The new administration disagreed with the 'overpersonalization' of US-Russia relations (Gvosdev and Marsh, 2014, 85). In contrast to his predecessor, Bush believed that there was no reason for paying much attention to Moscow and its interests. In his view, Russia was too weak to constitute a threat to the US (Spanger, 2008, 51).

At the same time in Moscow, the new Russian administration interpreted the previous US administration's 'excessive defence of the Yeltsin presidency' as a way to secure 'US preferences and interests' in Russia (Gvosdev and Marsh, 2014, 85). Vladimir Putin, the new Russian President, who had previously held the post of head of the FSB, Prime Minister, and acting President in 1999, won the election in 2000 and immediately made it clear that he would not allow Russia to become a tool of the West (Gvosdev and Marsh, 2014, 85).

However, in the first years of the Bush and Putin administrations, both sides made a sincere effort to promote the US-Russia partnership. According to Sakwa, between 2000-2012, Putin tried to engage with the 'Historic West' and integrate Russia into various European and international structures (Sakwa, 2017a). The author suggests that his aim was to demonstrate that 'Russia could be a responsible and cooperative partner, and thus the creation of a Greater West would serve the interests not only of Russia but also of the Atlantic powers' (ibid, 110).

This became clear following 9/11 when the Russian President was the first foreign leader to contact President Bush and offer assistance in combating terrorism. More concretely, Putin offered military assistance to the Afghan Northern Alliance, opening airspace for the passage of humanitarian aid and participating in search and rescue operations. As one US official remarked, 'Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan in 2001 marked the closest alignment of US and Russian interests, and Russian support was as important as that of any NATO ally' (Kuchins, 2016).

In return, however, the Kremlin expected to get certain benefits. First, the combat operation in Afghanistan was expected to silence criticism of Moscow's Chechnya policy since Putin had insisted that Al-Qaeda was funding and training Chechen terrorists. Second, Putin expected to 'obtain concessions on security issues' that in the past were causing tension in US-Russian relations. Finally, he might have expected that the West would postpone or abandon the idea of further NATO enlargement (Light and Allison, 2006, 10).

Indeed, the participation in the US-led coalition did silence criticism over Russia's Chechnya policy but only for a short time. However, according to Allison, Light and White (2006), it did not lead to any concession on security issues as Putin had expected. Instead, on December 13, 2001, the Bush Administration announced that the United States was withdrawing from the Antiballistic Missile Treaty signed with the Soviet Union back in 1972, and only a few months later, Washington announced that NATO would admit the Baltic States by 2004 (Kuchins, 2016).

According to a former American official, despite the fact that 'Putin took ABM and NATO decisions quite calmly', these developments led to the realisation that 'a strategic partnership with the United States meant that, if you accept Washington's agenda, you remain a partner in good standing, but you are not allowed to contribute to developing the agenda jointly; and if you object, you will be thrown overboard' (Kuchins, 2016).

Although US-Russian cooperation peaked in the fall of 2001 with the defeat of the Taliban, by 2004 several developments had led to a sharp deterioration in the US-Russia relations.

4.2.7 The Iraq War

Moscow's opposition to the US invasion of Iraq was undeniably a 'departure from the earlier rapprochement' between Russia and the US, one that seriously tested their relationship (Ambrosio, 2005, 1189). Despite the efforts made, the two countries did not reach an agreement over Operation Iraqi Freedom.

In late February 2003, Moscow dispatched the Head of the Presidential Administration, Alexander Voloshin, to Washington to 'broker a deal' (Stent, 2015, 91). From his visit, Voloshin, who happened to be one of the few supporters of closer ties with Washington in the Kremlin, after making contact with high US officials came to the conclusion that policymakers in the US were mistakenly left with the impression that 'Russia's only interest in Iraq was material' (ibid). The Bush Administration failed to understand that, considering that Russia already had domestic problems with Islamic extremists, the Kremlin was concerned over the fact that an invasion in Iraq would possibly lead to destabilisation in the Russian neighbourhood. Thus, Voloshin returned to Moscow without a deal. Primakov's visit to Baghdad on February 22, 2003, to convince Saddam Hussein 'to step back and comply with UN demands' in order 'to avoid a war that he could not possibly win' was not successful either (Stent, 2015, 91).

A few days later, on March 5, the Kremlin announced that it would block any US-proposed resolution in the UN that would authorise the use of force against Baghdad, thus aligning with France and Germany who had also spoken out against a non-UN authorised

invasion of Iraq (Ferguson, 2003, Stent, 2003). However, American officials stated that in any case, the US and other like-minded nations were prepared to launch an attack, even without UN approval (Goldenberg, 2002). On March 20, 2003, the day the war began, Berlin, Paris and Moscow declared the war illegal since the US was acting without the sanction of the United Nations Security Council (Sanger and Burns, 2003). On the same day, Putin accused Washington of replacing international law with the 'law of the fist' (Stent, 2015, 91).

Many scholars argue that it seemed 'odd that Moscow did not give the US its support in the Iraq War', considering the risks that the decision posed to the relationship between the two countries (Hallenberg and Karlsson, 2005, 55). Stent (2015), who served as an advisor on Russia under Bill Clinton and George W. Bush, has concluded that Russia's refusal to support the war in Iraq resulted from a combination of factors different from those that American officials supposed initially.

The American interpretation of Russia's opposition was, indeed, attributed to economic interests. Bush's own view was that 'Vladimir Putin did not consider Saddam a threat' and that 'part of the reason was Putin did not want to jeopardise Russia's lucrative oil contracts' (Stent, 2015, 91).

However, Stent argues that the 'real story is more complex and includes other important elements', such as Moscow's anger over Washington's unilateralism and dismissive attitude towards the UN and perhaps simply Russia's unwillingness to overthrow a long-term Russian client (Stent, 2015, 91). Other reasons include domestic constraints, such as the impact the war might have had on Russia's Muslim populated regions and opinion polls showing that fifty-two per cent of Russians were against the invasion of Iraq. Considering the fact that 'much of the Russian elite believed that Russia [had] not received anything for its support of the United States, post 9/11', the Kremlin's opposition should come as no surprise (ibid, 93).

Similarly, other authors demonstrated that Russia's refusal to support Bush in Iraq could be attributed to several different factors. For example, Ambrosio finds that Russian opposition to the US invasion of Iraq was rooted much more 'in issues of status and prestige, than material cost-benefit calculations' (Ambrosio, 2005, 1206). In fact, the author suggests that Russia's Iraq policy allowed the country to mark its independence from Washington and position itself as a great power, one that was defending the world from 'the negative consequences of American-dominated unipolarity' (ibid). After all, Moscow never endorsed Washington's definition of Iraq, Iran and North Korea as 'axes of evil' (Hallenberg and Karlsson, 2005). In the Russian President's perception, Iraq was not a threat either to Russia or to global security, and there was no evidence of any links between Iraq and Al-Qaeda. In that context, the Kremlin thought that the war in Iraq would only further complicate global anti-terrorism efforts.

Overall, one can argue that the Kremlin's view was that 'there were few benefits to be gained' from supporting the US-led military operation in Iraq. Instead, by aligning with Germany and France, Putin, while cautious about breaking relations with Washington, hoped that Russia 'would gain concrete benefits, including closer ties with EU' (Stent, 2015, 93).

4.2.8 Towards the Deterioration of US-Russian relations

According to Gvosdev and Marsh (2014), several developments led to further deterioration of US-Russian relations in the coming years. One of these was the Beslan school hostage crisis in September 2004. Heavily armed Chechen separatists took more than a thousand people hostage at a school in North Ossetia, demanding the withdrawal of Russian forces from neighbouring Chechnya. As a result of this, more than 330 people, including 180 children, died during the rescue operation. Gvosdev and Marsh (2014, 89) argue that 'America's criticism of Russian

actions, including the general scope of Russian counterinsurgency policies' along with 'continued sympathy for the Chechen cause among some US officials' made Russian officials think that Washington had no intention of standing by Moscow when it comes to fighting terrorism.

Other developments, such as the US support for the Rose Revolution in Georgia in 2003, which propelled Mikheil Saakashvili to power, support for the Orange Revolution in Ukraine in 2004 which resulted in the victory of the pro-Western candidate Victor Yushchenko, opposition to the Russian plan to reunite the separatist region of Transdnistria with Moldova, and the support for a pro-American authoritarian regime in Baku, Azerbaijan, strengthened the view in Moscow that Washington was not interested in supporting democracy but rather in containing Russian influence in the region (Rutland and Dubinsky, 2012). Furthermore, the 2004 enlargement of NATO and American support for Georgia and Ukraine's membership of NATO reinforced Russian suspicions that 'Washington was working against Russia's security and economic interests in its own backyard' (Gvosdev and Marsh, 2018, 89).

Clearly, the US was not taking into consideration Russian interests. Washington was neither willing to treat Russia as an equal partner nor as an important player in the global scene, mainly because the prevailing view in the US was that Russia was too weak to be taken seriously (Spanger, 2008). However, it soon became clear that while the US was underestimating Russia as an actor on the international scene and the impact of the internal reform efforts on the country's power, Putin was restoring Russian power. More specifically, the Russian President managed to centralise power and foreign policy under his rule, pay off the country's $22 billion debt to the IMF in 2006, and make significant progress in regaining influence in the post-Soviet space by using energy diplomacy. Russia's economic and political recovery was 'fuelled' by the sharp rise in energy prices, which delivered billions of roubles to the Russian economy, enabling Russia to adopt a more aggressive foreign policy towards the

West. As the next chapters will demonstrate, the realisation in Washington that energy exports have played a central role in the restoration of Russian power would lead to US efforts to restrict the export of Russian resources in order to contain the growing Russian influence in Europe and limit the country's hard currency income.

In 2006, Vice-President Cheney's speech in Vilnius added strains to the already fragile US-Russian relations. Cheney not only accused the Russian government of unfairly and improperly restricting its citizens' rights but also of using oil and gas as tools of intimidation and blackmail, referring to the New Year's temporary shutoff of natural gas to Ukraine. The spokesman for the Kremlin, Dmitri Peskov, called the US Vice-President's remarks unfounded and 'completely incomprehensible' while according to Stephen Sestanovich, a senior Russia policy official in the Clinton Administration, Cheney's speech reflected 'a scaling back of expectations of the relationship with Moscow' (Mayer, 2006).

Spanger suggests that 'for observers in Moscow this holier-than-thou attitude was the final proof that Bush's democracy crusade was pursuing one aim above all: territorial gains in Russia's geostrategic hinterland' (Spanger, 2008, 61). It is suggested that Cheney's Vilnius Speech was the turning point in Washington relations with Moscow, to the extent that it was followed by a 'Cold War of words and symbolic gestures increasingly inflamed,' in the months to come (Spanger, 2008, 61). Spanger point outs that what began as a war of words over 'democracy' escalated into a 'frontal attack by Russia on the world order of the 'unipolar moment', to which the Bush administration [regarded] itself as being committed' (ibid, 62). Just a year later, Putin would challenge US global dominance – most strikingly in his Munich speech (Spanger, 2008).

2.4.9 The Munich Speech

On February 10, 2007, at the Munich Conference on Security Policy, Vladimir Putin openly stated that 'the unipolar world is not only unacceptable but also impossible in today's world'. Thus, sending a clear message to the United States that Moscow was unhappy with a unipolar world, in which the United States was the 'one centre of authority, one centre of force, one centre of decision making' (Putin, 2007). He openly accused the United States of overstepping 'its national borders in every way' and emphasised that since no country feels 'that international law is like a stone wall that will protect' it, the arms race is unavoidable (ibid).

During his speech, Putin also referred to the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, signed in 1999, but not ratified by NATO countries. NATO countries linked their ratification of the Treaty with Russian commitments undertaken at the 1999 OSCE Istanbul Summit, according to which Moscow had to remove its military bases from Moldova and Georgia. The Russian President stated that while Russia's army was leaving Georgia and was working in this direction in the case of Moldova, thereby fulfilling its treaty obligations, he was concerned by the fact that, at the same time, 'NATO has put its frontline forces' at Russia's borders (ibid). More specifically, he stated that,

> NATO expansion does not have any relation with the modernisation of the Alliance itself or with ensuring security in Europe. On the contrary, it represents a serious provocation that reduces the level of mutual trust. And we have the right to ask: against whom is this expansion intended? And what happened to the assurances our western partners made after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact? Where are those declarations today? No one even remembers them. But I will allow myself to remind this audience what was said. I would like to quote the speech of NATO General Secretary Mr Woerner in Brussels on 17 May 1990. He said at the time that: 'the fact that we are ready not to place a NATO army outside of German territory gives the Soviet Union a firm security guarantee. Where are these guarantees?' (Putin, 2007)

In his view, NATO expansion was creating new dividing lines and 'walls' that 'cut through' the European continent, which might require 'decades, as well as several generations of politicians, to dissemble and dismantle' (ibid).

However, Washington challenged Putin's accusation that the United States acted unilaterally and favoured the use of military force, over diplomacy. Tony Snow, the White House spokesman, remarked that when dealing with international issues, the US Administration, 'has always begun with an international diplomatic component and will continue to' (Tully, 2007).

Clearly, the tone of Putin's speech indicated an emotional response to accumulated disappointments dating back to the 1990s such as 'Moscow's past acceptance of the war in the Balkans, two rounds of NATO expansion, the US troop presence in Central Asia and, of course, the 2003 invasion of Iraq' (Tully, 2007). In fact, according to Carpenter, the Vice President for defence and foreign policy studies at the Cato Institute,

> What has been developing over the past year or so and really culminated with this speech was a clear declaration that those days are over, that Russia is going to stand up strongly for its interests, it's not happy about the direction of US foreign policy, and that it will make those views known very clearly (Carpenter as cited in Tully, 2007).

Carpenter also expressed the view that he expected Moscow to stand up for its interests and exert indirect pressure on the United States: forcing Washington to begin treating Russia with more respect than it has since the collapse of the Soviet Union. More concretely, according to the scholar in the last fifteen years,

> There developed an attitude in Washington that we could pretty well barge into a traditional Russian sphere of influence, and Moscow could do nothing about it…but Russia has made it abundantly clear that it's no longer content to be treated as a third-rate power. And that's pretty much what Washington had been doing for a good many years (Carpenter as cited in Tully, 2007)

Many observers also interpreted Putin's speech as a direct expression of the views of the Kremlin and essentially a warning that a lack of respect for Russia's interests would unavoidably lead to confrontation.

Putin's Munich speech, however, did not mean that the Russian President did not see any prospects of US-Russian cooperation but rather that he expected this cooperation to be limited. By the end of 2007, it was clear that even the personal friendship of Putin and Bush could not prevent clashes over significant policy differences; over NATO enlargement, Kosovo independence, or over the installation of missile defence systems in Poland and the Czech Republic (Gvosdev, 2014).

2.4.10 The August (2008) War

When President Medvedev and President Obama took office in 2008, they were both aware that the relations of their countries had reached a dangerously low point and that both the US and Russia would benefit from a reset of these relations.

Earlier, in 2007, the US Congress had passed legislation that made the support for the admission of Georgia and Ukraine into NATO official US policy (Gvosdev, 2014). Thus, NATO's Bucharest summit in April 2008 seemed to open the door to Ukraine's and Georgia's membership of NATO, to which Russians had expressed strong opposition (Fried, 2008). During the meeting with NATO leaders, Putin called NATO's promise to admit Georgia and Ukraine a direct threat to Russian security, also stating that 'NATO cannot guarantee its security at the expense of other countries' (Erlanger, 2008).

Putin denied that Moscow had imperial ambitions and, according to an official, expressed the view that his colleagues from the ex-Soviet states 'went as far as total demonisation of Russia and cannot get away from this even now' (Erlanger, 2008). His anger,

however, was eased by the fact that the 'old' NATO members, in contrast to the 'new' members, did not support Washington's proposal for immediately welcoming the two aspiring members into a Membership Action Plan (MAP).

In February 2008, President Putin had also opposed the decision of the US and most European countries to recognise the independence of Kosovo, suggesting that there would be consequences (Sakwa, 2017a; Rutland and Dubinsky, 2012). While, as Sakwa points out that at that time it 'was not clear what these consequences would be', later it became evident that Putin most probably meant that the recognition of Kosovo's independence would serve as a precedent for Russian recognition of Georgia's breakaway republics of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and perhaps the annexation of Crimea, later, in 2014 (Sakwa, 2017a, 93).

In May 2008, Putin handed over his post to his long-time aide Medvedev, who soon had his first major test as President of Russia. On August 7, 2008, Georgian troops attacked the breakaway province of South Ossetia, provoking Russian forces to push deep into Georgia and bomb army bases and a military airport. According to Rutland and Dubinsky, the Kremlin 'took the assault as a direct challenge to Russia's credibility as a regional power' (2012, 253). While there was much disagreement as to whether the 'Russian invasion' of South Ossetia was already underway on the night of August 7, when Georgia opened fire (Rutland and Dubinsky, 2012), an independent report, commissioned by the European Union blamed Georgia 'for starting... the five-day war with Russia, but said Moscow's military response went beyond reasonable limits and violated international law' (Heritage, 2009). Heritage also quotes the Swiss diplomat Heidi Tagliavini who stated that, in 'the Mission's view, it was Georgia which triggered off the war when it attacked Tskhinvali (in South Ossetia) with heavy artillery on the night of 7 to 8 August 2008' (Heritage 2009).

According to Gvosdev and Marsh (2014), the Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili, due to his personal relationship with President Bush and strong political support within the

United States for Georgia's membership of NATO, believed he would 'have US support in any clash with Russia' (Struckman and Gvosdev, 2010, 80). It is important to stress that Georgia under Saakashvili had 'become one of the largest recipients of US aid', and also, as a reward for 'becoming one of the largest contributors of forces to the US-led missions in Iraq and Afghanistan, had obtained a good deal of military training and equipment' for its forces (Gvosdev and Marsh, 2014, 91).

The US did not respond to the Russian operation in Georgia, while Moscow took no further action against Tbilisi following the EU-brokered ceasefire. However, this Russia-Georgian conflict led to the suspension of military ties between Russia and NATO countries and 'effectively ended any chance of approving a civil nuclear deal' between Russia and the United States (Gvosdev and Marsh, 2014, 91). Most importantly, however, the Georgian War and the suspension of natural gas supplies to Ukraine in January 2009 were a clear signal that Moscow would not hesitate to sacrifice its relations with the West in order to protect its interests in the region (Gvosdev and Marsh, 2014).

4.2.11 Barack Obama- Dmitry Medvedev: The 'Reset' in US-Russian relations

In 2009, Moscow and Washington signalled a desire to 'reset' their relations. However, according to Mankoff, resetting the two countries' relationship would be challenging, considering Moscow's sensitivity over the US intrusion into its 'near abroad' (Mankoff, 2009).

President Obama's inauguration signalled the renewal of bilateral cooperation between the US and Russia, which was primarily 'based on pragmatism regarding shared interests and a culture of increased communication, trust, and respect' (Rojansky and Collins, 2010). Both President Obama and President Medvedev appeared eager to move ahead with talks on arms control, missile defence and the war in Afghanistan. These issues would also determine

whether or not the two countries could move from ‘limited cooperation to a more durable partnership’ (Mankoff, 2009).

Indeed, some progress was soon evident in security spheres over such areas as ‘traditional arms control and nuclear non-proliferation, transnational threats of terrorism and trafficking (Rojansky and Collins, 2010). Moreover, according to Rojansky and Collins (ibid), though falling short of some expectations in the West, Russia’s support for multilateral sanctions against Tehran grew steadily after a productive summit between the Russian and US Presidents in 2009.

Gvosdev and Marsh suggest that ‘the reset was aided by other factors’ outside of Washington’s control. Yanukovych’s election to the Ukrainian presidency in 2010 resulted in a ‘more balanced foreign policy for Ukraine between Russia and the West’ (Gvosdev and Marsh, 2014, 92). The new Ukrainian President ended Ukraine’s NATO membership ambitions and, to Moscow’s satisfaction, extended the lease on Russia’s naval base in Crimea. In return, Moscow reduced by thirty per cent the price Kyiv paid for Russian natural gas (RfERL, 2010).

The extensive diplomatic efforts of the President of France, Nicolas Sarkozy and German Chancellor Angela Merkel, in an attempt to integrate Moscow in the discussion of European security matters, as well as efforts to ‘accelerate the bonds of economic integration’ between Russia and the West also aided the ‘reset’ (Gvosdev and Marsh, 2014, 92).

However, the positive momentum in US-Russian relations was soon to be ended by Medvedev’s departure and Putin’s return to power in May 2012. Putin’s return marked the beginning of a new war of words between the Russian President and US politicians, such as John McCain and Hillary Clinton. Moreover, early in the following year, in response to efforts to support the opposition in Russia led by foreign governments, Moscow imposed new

restrictions on the activities of non-governmental organisations that received financing from American sources (ibid, 95).

Several other developments led to the deterioration of US-Russian relations, such as the case of Sergei Magnitsky and the adoption of legislation in Washington that targeted Russian officials. Magnitsky was an accountant who died in jail in Russia in November 2009 under strange circumstances. In response, later in 2016, the US Congress enacted the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act, which allows sanctions on foreign officials suspected of human rights abuses. Russia responded by adopting legislation that targeted US officials. Other developments included the arrest of an anti-Putin, Punk-rock collective - Pussy Riot - in February 2012 and the banning of the US Agency for International Development in Russia in September 2012.

In 2013, however, the realisation that further deterioration might jeopardise the progress made in the last few years led to efforts on both sides to find a way to overcome the irritants in the US-Russian relationship. However, US-Russian relations deteriorated to their lowest point since the end of the Cold War following Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 and Moscow's support for separatism in Eastern Ukraine. In response to this, the US-led West imposed economic sanctions on Russia, which were strengthened and extended several times.

Later, in 2016, Washington and Moscow found themselves on opposite sides of the Syrian civil war that began in 2011. The US backed anti-government rebels, whereas Russia rode to President Assad's rescue. Although the US and Russia tried to cooperate at various junctures against the Islamic State in Syria under Obama and Trump, discussions on US-Russian coordination, centred on possible intelligence sharing and synchronising campaigns and operations against the Islamist militants, failed as Moscow and Washington had fundamentally opposed foreign policy goals in Syria (Weiss and Ng, 2019).

Many in Russia saw the Trump presidency as an opportunity to restore US-Russian relations, as he had repeatedly spoken in favour of improving US-Russian relations. However, the charges of Russian interference in the 2016 US presidential election limited President Trump's room for manoeuvre, which eventually led to a further deterioration in US-Russian relations (Sakwa, 2017b).

Overall, the first half of this chapter discussed how US-Russian relations evolved following the collapse of the Soviet Union. As Table 7 shows, it is impossible to talk about great power competition between 1991 and 2004, as Russia was not a great power. However, between 2004 and 2014, the recovery of the Russian economy and the modernisation of the Russian military sector raised concerns in Washington. During this time, we witnessed an increase in the occurrence of clashes over incompatible interests despite efforts to 'reset' the US-Russian relations in 2009. Thus it is safe to say that between 2004 and 2014, the competition between the US and Russia intensified. The US-Russian relations further deteriorated following the annexation of Crimea in 2014, the Syrian crisis and the alleged Russian meddling in the 2016 US Presidential elections.

Understanding how US-Russian relations evolved in the post-Cold War era is particularly important for this project. The past experiences seem to have a significant impact on both Moscow's US policy and Washington's Russia policy. Therefore, providing a comprehensive analysis of the impact of great power competition on European energy politics without first looking at developments that led to a deterioration in these relations would have been impossible.

Period	State of competition
1991-2004	The US is the dominant global power ▪ Washington sees Russia as too weak to pose a threat to the US → no Great Power competition
2004-2009	The US is the dominant global power, but the recovery of the Russian economy and the modernisation of the Russian military sector raises concerns in Washington Increase in occurrence of clashes over incompatible interests ▪ Orange Revolution (2004) ▪ Expansion of NATO (2004) ▪ Ukraine gas crisis (2006) ▪ US support for extending MAP for Ukraine and Georgia (2008) ▪ Georgian War (2008) ▪ Ukraine gas crisis (2009) → US-Russian competition intensifies
2009 -2014	'Reset'in the US-Russian relations, but positive momentum ended with Putin's return to power. US and Russian interests clash over several areas: ▪ US support of political opposition in Russia ▪ Russia's NGO laws ▪ Post-Soviet Space → US-Russian competition intensifies
2014-2019	Relations between the US and Russia further deteriorate ▪ Annexation of Crimea (2014) ▪ Moscow's support of separatism in Eastern ▪ Syrian crisis ▪ the alleged Russian meddling in the 2016 US Presidential elections → the competition between the US and Russia further intensifies

Table 7 Summary table of the state of GP competition between 1991-2019.

Source: Created by the author

Equally important for this project is the understanding of EU-Russian relations in the post-Cold War era. This is because, in the more recent years, the energy partnership between the Russian and the European states, the closest political and military allies of the US, have complicated both EU-American relations and US-Russian relations. Thus, the next section will provide a wider perspective on EU-Russian relations over the period 1990-2014, while the next chapter will discuss the EU-Russian energy partnership.

4.3 Russia and the EU

According to Greene, during the 1990s Moscow 'viewed the EU as a sort of "anti-NATO"; a benign organisation that provided economic and technical support for Russia's transformation...without substantial strategic weight of its own' and most importantly 'with the potential to de-link the United States from Europe' (Greene, 2012, 5). Soon, however, it became clear that the EU had the potential to influence vital Russian interests. Greene points out that an 'early wake-up call was Bulgaria's introduction of a visa regime for Russian citizens in 2001', leading to the realisation in Moscow that not only had Russia lost its influence in the region, but it also faced the threat of isolation from its traditionally close partners (ibid, 6).

Later, the admission of eight countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the Baltic States to the EU in 2004 and of two more in 2007 raised more vigorously the question of the economic and political costs that Russia might have to bear as a result of the EU enlargement. As DeBardeleben wisely notes, the 'EU enlargement had indirectly reinforced an atmosphere of competition between the EU and Russia in the shared neighbourhood, even if the EU maintains that this is not a zero-sum game' (DeBardeleben, 2013, 49).

According to Sakwa (2017a), the 1994 Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation (PCA) was one of three main attempts to institutionalise a 'strategic partnership' with Russia, with the other two being the Four Common Spaces and the Partnership of Modernisation. It was 'negotiated with a weak but pro-Western Russia' under Boris Yeltsin's presidency (European Union Center of North Carolina, 2008, 2) in 1994, but the ratification was delayed until 1997 due to the war in Chechnya (Sakwa, 2017a). By that time, Russia was already receiving economic and other types of support from Brussels through Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of Independent States (TACIS). Paradoxically, the major principles and objectives of this ten-year agreement included 'the promotion of international peace and security, support for democratic norms and for political and economic freedoms' (Light, 2008, 84). The PCA also established an institutional framework for ministerial level and civil servant level consultations. This included the bi-annual meeting of Heads of States, the regular meeting of ministers in the Cooperation Council and frequent exchanges between members of the European Parliament and the Russian Federal Assembly (Light and Allison, 2006).

Later, in June 1997, the European Union signed the Amsterdam Treaty, the main purpose of which was to make the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) more efficient. The Amsterdam Treaty established a new policy instrument called 'common strategies' (Light, 2006).

The first Common Strategy on Russia 'committed the EU to assist in the establishment of a 'stable, open and pluralistic democracy in Russia', and aimed at 'responding to the common challenges of the continent through intensified cooperation' (Light, 2006, 6). However, irritated by the 'apparent tone of condescension and hubris' used in the document, Russia responded to the Common Strategy, in 1999, by presenting its own 'Medium-Term Strategy' for the development of relations between Russia and the EU (Light, 2006, Light, 2008).

According to Light, EU-Russian relations ‘continued to develop smoothly until the second Chechen war began in 1999’ (Light 2008, 86). At the very beginning of the war, the Council of the European Union adopted a highly critical declaration, condemning Russia’s military campaign in Chechnya while it at the same time limited its TACIS assistance. The Kremlin was offended by EU demands over what it viewed as its domestic affairs. Despite this, however, President Putin remained committed to the development of a closer relationship with Europe, as he appeared to be convinced that Russia belonged to a ‘greater Europe’.

Following these unfortunate events, according to the European Union Centre of North Carolina, ‘of more lasting importance for the strategic partnership has been the development of the EU-Russia energy dialogue in 2000’ (European Union Centre of North Carolina, 2008, 2). The energy dialogue aimed to develop a long-term EU-Russian energy partnership. The forum was held at regular intervals in order to discuss energy-related questions, including exploration, production and transportation of energy resources. One of the main objectives of the forum was Moscow’s ratification of the Energy Charter Treaty. Considering the fact that this was not achieved, as Russia refused to ratify the Charter, it can be argued that the energy dialogue failed to deliver any important results.

In general, according to Light, ‘low politics’ predominated in the EU-Russian relationship and although the author notes that much was achieved by the mid-2000s, she admits that ‘the relationship falls short of what might be expected from a strategic partnership’ (Light, 2008, 84). Light finds that part of the problem was Russia’s preference for bilateral relations, which had interfered with the development of EU-Russian relations. On the other hand, Russians were frustrated ‘by their inability to set the Russia-EU agenda’ and Brussels’ expectations that ‘Russia should be a ‘policy taker’ rather than a sovereign policy maker’ (Light, 2008, 84). Clearly, both sides were dissatisfied with their relationship. By the mid-2000s, EU experts on Russia were already talking about a ‘systemic crisis’ in EU-Russian

relations, stressing the need to replace the PCA, after its expiration in 2007, with a new type of agreement. Similarly, the EU's dissatisfaction is clearly evident in the report on relations with Russia, requested by the European Council and drawn up by the European Commission in 2004, because 'relations have...come under increasing strain with divergence between EU and Russia positions on a number of issues' (Light, 2006, 69). Light notes that one of the main reasons for the deterioration in relations between Moscow and Brussels was the EU enlargement in 2004, which 'has led to a growing determination to re-establish and preserve Russia's sphere of influence' in the post-Soviet space (Light, 2008, 84).

The European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) was conceived following the 2004 enlargement 'in order to avoid creating new borders in Europe' (Sakwa, 2017a, 139). It spans sixteen neighbouring countries to the South and the East, and aims to bring 'the EU and its neighbours closer, to their mutual benefits and interests', it supports 'the economic development of its partner countries', and seeks to 'improve the aspirations, hopes and prospects of the local population, while keeping a strong focus on good governance, democracy and the rule of law' (The EU Neighbourhood Information Centre, 2018). While the European Union had the intention to include Russia in its ENP, Russia's refusal to be treated as a junior partner and its insistence on the establishment of an equal strategic partnership 'set the EU's eastern policy in a two-track mode' (DeBardeleben, 2011, 246).

Thus, one set of policies was established for non-EU members of the ex-Soviet nations, Mediterranean and African countries; in parallel, the EU and Russia identified the 'Four Common Spaces': economics, internal security, foreign affairs, and research in 2003, and developed the 'Roadmaps' for each of these areas of cooperation in 2005. However, several subsequent events, such as the Colour Revolutions of 2004-5, NATO enlargement in 2004, the Russia-Ukrainian gas dispute in 2006 and the Georgian War in 2008, which are discussed in

more detail in the following chapters, indicated that developing and maintaining a 'strategic partnership' between the EU and Russia was not an easy task.

EU-Russian relations further deteriorated when the EU launched the Eastern Partnership Policy (EaP) in 2009. The plans for the EaP were first presented by Poland's foreign minister, Radoslaw Sikorski and his Swedish colleague Carl Bildt. The idea behind the EaP was to 'create added value to existing mechanisms' by encouraging links between the European Union and its eastern neighbours, Ukraine, Moldova, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia and Belarus (Vogel, 2008). The Eastern Partnership Policy was formally launched in May 2009, and while it 'was not considered a step to EU membership' it sought to draw 'these countries into a Western orientation' (Sakwa, 2017a,139-140).

Sakwa stresses that the EaP 'represented the return of bloc politics to Europe', and in support of his argument, he points to a US cable in 2008 published by WikiLeaks (ibid, 140). The cable acknowledged that the Polish initiative aimed to 'counter Russia's influence in Eastern Europe' and suggested Poland was a reliable US ally as Washington sought ways 'to enhance western influence beyond NATO's eastern borders' (ibid). In that context, Russia's concerns about the EU's efforts to project its influence over a region that Moscow considered part of its sphere of influence should not come as a surprise.

Despite all European reassurance, President Medvedev and the foreign minister Lavrov remained sceptical about the EaP. The EaP and how it would affect Russia's interests in the CIS was also discussed in the Federation Council – the upper house of the Russian Parliament – where the deputies shared the view that the initiative was the 'European alternative to the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States] aiming to oust Russia' from the post-Soviet space (Gretskiy, Treshchenkov and Golubev, 2014, 380). Thus, the EaP was largely interpreted by the Russian expert community as 'turf war' (ibid). In response to the EaP, many experts

expressed the view that there is a need for alternative integration projects in the post-Soviet space.

Following the 2009 Eastern Partnership Summit, the Russian President and the Russian Government took steps leading to the realisation of a new, alternative integration project, the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU). These included establishing a EurAsEC Customs Union between Belarus, Kazakhstan and Russia with the aim of evolving into a European Union-inspired single market, in 2010; establishing the Common Economic Space (CES) in the Eurasian region to ensure the effective functioning of a single market, in 2012; signing of the agreement on establishing the Eurasian Economic Union by 2015; and signing the treaty on EAEU in 2014, which came into effect in January 2015 (Gretskiy, Treshchenkov and Golubev, 2014).

Following the 2008 Georgian War and the 2009 Russia-Ukrainian gas dispute, not many in the West expected any significant changes in Russia's foreign policy, and as a result in the relations between Russia and the West. However, according to Moshes (2012), hopes were revitalised following President Medvedev's publication of an article, titled *Forward, Russia!*, in which he appeared to be critical of the state of affairs in Russia and welcomed the possibility of change.

According to the Moshes, the 'expectations of rapprochement between Russia and Europe were based on several rational arguments' (ibid, 2012, 17). These were Medvedev's intention to embark Russia on a path of modernisation, concerns of Russia's political class over the rise of China, and most importantly, NATO's exclusion of the possibility of further eastern expansion in the short term and the postponement of US missile defence plans. Most importantly, however, the rapprochement with the EU was now possible because of the 'reset' in US-Russian relations (ibid).

In the context of rapprochement, the European Union and Russia announced a 'Partnership for Modernisation' with a joint statement during the summit in Rostov-on-Don on June 1, 2010 (Council of the European Union, 2010a; Casier and Debardelaben, 2018). In view of the failure to renegotiate the outdated PCA agreement and the lack of progress of the Four Common Spaces programme, the hopes laid on the Partnership for Modernisation were particularly high. The agenda of this new partnership would include economic, social, environmental and legal dimensions, and the basic idea was that Brussels would assist Moscow 'in its reform efforts by providing capital, technology, and training' (Longdi, 2011). According to Longdi, the 'implicit assumption is that a more modern Russia would be more Western-oriented, open, and easier to deal with' (ibid). This new effort, however, proved to be short on accomplishments, most probably because the parties involved had very different expectations. The EU expected a modernisation programme that would first of all ensure Russia's political modernisation, while Moscow did not think that political modernisation was necessary, at least not the kind defined by the West.

Despite the numerous documents signed and the attempts to establish a constructive EU-Russian partnership ten years after the EU 2004 enlargement, EU-Russian relations suffered a radical rupture following the Russia-Ukrainian crisis in 2013. The crisis resulted from Russia's objection to Ukraine signing a long-planned Association Agreement, including a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area with the EU. Amidst Russian pressure on Ukraine, President Viktor Yanukovych backed off from the EU deal, which resulted in massive protest demonstrations in Kyiv, and Russia's annexation of Crimea in March 2014, following a referendum. Eventually, these dramatic events led to the further deterioration of EU-Russian relations, which resulted in the imposition of sanctions and embargoes on both sides.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that the collapse of the Soviet Union led to dramatic changes in global affairs. Interestingly, however, a close analysis of various data such as official documents, statements of high-ranking politicians, and the relevant literature shows that the rivalry between Washington and Moscow continued in the post-Cold War era despite fundamental changes.

In the immediate post-Cold War period, efforts were made by the United States and the successor state of the Soviet Union, Russia, to cooperate in several different areas, including the 'democratisation' of Russia and the transformation of the country's economy from central planning to market economy, nuclear security, non-proliferation and counter-terrorism. However, it soon became apparent that despite the shared interests and the efforts made by both sides, the incompatibility of their primary national interests and the lack of trust led to the re-emergence of Cold War-type rivalry between Russia and the United States. Did the two countries, however, have a legitimate cause for not trusting each other? The answer is that evidence shows they did.

Despite the occasional conciliatory rhetoric, Washington demonstrated a lack of trust towards Moscow. Clinton's concern over the unanticipated success of the right-wing Liberal Democratic Party, led by Vladimir Zhirinovsky in the State Duma elections in 1993, prompted him to approve the first NATO enlargement. Thereby demonstrating that the US President was determined to seize the window opportunity and maximise Washington's relative power by expanding its sphere of influence at the expense of Moscow and his 'friend' Boris Yeltsin.

Excluding Russia from the peace settlement while at the same time pushing for economic reforms that failed, plunging a good deal of the Russian population into poverty, and supporting multiple colour revolutions in Russia's backyard, soon led to the realisation in Moscow that Washington was simply promoting its own interests in the region.

However, in the second half of the 2000s, Russia's economic recovery and the gradual modernisation of its military sector under President Putin raised Moscow's expectation of being treated as an equal power by the United States. Not surprisingly, Moscow's concerns and interests were largely ignored. For example, despite the Kremlin's multiple warnings about being sensitive to NATO's expansion to its border, the US administrations formally supported Georgia's and Ukraine's membership of NATO.

In fact, one can argue that the 2008 Georgian military attack on the breakaway region of South Ossetia, which escalated to war with Russia, happened largely due to Saakashvili's misinterpretation of US support. The Georgian president was of the impression that he had the full support of the United States and NATO, support that never materialised. At the same time, the Georgian War marked a new era in Russian foreign policy, demonstrating that Moscow was willing to risk its relations with the West in order to defend its interests.

Even though there was an attempt to 'reset' the relationship of the two countries during the first term of President Obama, and when Medvedev was President of Russia, Putin's re-election as the Russian President in 2012 led to the deterioration of US-Russian relations. However, the relations of the two countries reached their lowest point after Russia annexed Crimea in 2014, following US-backed Euromaidan protests. The developments led to the imposition of sanctions by both sides and demonstrated, once again, that the lack of trust between the two countries and the efforts of each to maximise its relative power at the expense of the other are to blame for the tensions between Washington and Moscow.

Understanding the historical experiences of the two countries and how they have shaped the strategic culture in the US and Russia are of paramount importance for this study, as the strategic culture can significantly impact the foreign policy of states.

When it comes to EU-Russian relations, it can be argued that to a great extent both the highs and lows seem to follow the pattern of the ups and downs in US-Russian relations. Three

attempts were made to institutionalise the EU's strategic partnership with Moscow, the PCA, the Four Common Spaces and the Partnership for Modernisation. In general, it could be argued that EU-Russian relations continued to develop smoothly until the second Chechen war in 1999. The EU-Russian energy dialogue in 2000 was of more lasting importance for the strategic partnership between Brussels and Moscow, as it aimed at developing a long-term EU-Russian energy partnership. However, Moscow's failure to ratify the Energy Charter Treaty had resulted in the failure to deliver any important results.

In general, despite the efforts made, it is evident that low politics predominated in the EU-Russian partnership. To an extent, this can be attributed to Moscow's preference for bilateral relations, which led to the underdevelopment of EU-Russian relations. The EU-Russian relations were further complicated by the divergence between Brussels' and Moscow's positions on a number of issues. These include the EU enlargement in 2004, the NATO expansion of 2004, the Colour Revolutions of 2004-2005, the Russia-Ukraine gas dispute in 2006, and the Georgian War in 2008. EU-Russian relations were also further damaged by the introduction of the Eastern Partnership in 2009, which according to Sakwa represented the 'return of bloc politics to Europe' (Sakwa, 2107, 130-140).

Following the war in Georgia in 2008 and the Russian gas dispute with Ukraine in 2009, not many expected the normalisation of EU-Russian relations. However, hopes were revitalised when Dmitri Medvedev assumed the presidency in Russia. Still, the 'Partnership for Modernisation', which sought to improve EU-Russian relations, soon proved to be a failure due to the different interpretations and expectations which Brussels and Moscow placed on the agreement.

However, EU-Russian relations reached a critical juncture as a result of the Russia-Ukrainian crisis that erupted in late 2013 and the annexation of Crimea in 2014, which led to the imposition of sanctions and embargoes on both sides. The European Union expanded the

restrictive measures imposed after the shooting down of flight MH17 in June 2015 while flying over eastern Ukraine, a territory controlled by Russian-supported rebels.

In March 2016, the Foreign Affairs Council unanimously agreed on five guiding principles underlying the EU's relations with Russia: (1) implementation of the Minsk agreement as a condition for any substantial change in the Union's stance towards Russia; (2) strengthened relations with the Union's Eastern Partners including other neighbours, such as Central Asia; (3) enhancing the resilience of the EU (e.g. energy security, hybrid threats or strategic communication); (4) selective engagement with Moscow on issues of interest to the Union; (5) engagement in people-to-people contacts and cooperation with Russian civil society (Council of the European Union, 2016).

More recently, in 2019, European leaders such as the French president, Emmanuel Macron, have talked about improving EU-Russian relations, but no significant steps have been taken towards this goal.

Chapter Five - The Case of Energy Union: the evolution of European energy (gas) security policy from 1990 to 2019

Since 2006, EU energy policy, and in particular energy security, has attracted much attention among academics and experts. Scholars have examined the EU's internal and external energy policies and investigated matters ranging from the importance of speaking with one voice (Pedersen, Behrens and Egenhofer, 2008) to who is leading the EU energy policy (Maltby, 2013). Other questions that have been addressed include how much progress has been made towards the creation of a common energy policy in the EU (Eikeland, 2011; Youngs 2011), what obstacles stand in its way (Méritet, 2011; Duffield and Westphal, 2011), and what events explain the recent progress (Proedrou, 2012). However, what has not been investigated is the impact of external factors, such as the competing US-Russian national security interests, on the development of a common European energy security policy. This chapter aims to fill this gap in the literature by investigating the impact of US-Russian security competition on the development of a common European energy security policy between the early 1990s and 2019 and consists of two main parts.

The first part looks into the US-Russia energy wars during the Cold War era. It begins with an investigation of the US perspective on growing Soviet energy exports to Europe. Then it examines the Soviet Oil and Gas Offensive and Washington's responses to Soviet energy trade with European states. Examining the US-Russia energy wars is essential in order to understand the continuity of US policy towards Russian energy exports to Europe. This section also looks into the Russian energy policy in the post-Cold War era, followed by an analysis of the US view of Russia and Russian energy policy in Europe following the collapse of the Soviet Union. The second part of this chapter discusses how the common European energy security

policy has evolved out of previous treaties, thus presenting the historical background of energy security policy in the European Union since the creation of the Coal and Steel Community (1951) and Euratom (1957). More specifically, this chapter investigates the evolution of European energy policy before the 2004 EU enlargement and then between 2004 and 2019 to examine what led to the development of a common energy policy in the EU.

This case study will find that during the Cold War era and to a lesser extent in the early Post-Cold War era, Washington made significant efforts to check the sources of Moscow's increasing power. However, this chapter will find no evidence that points at the impact of the US-Russia security competition on the development of a common European energy security policy. One possible explanation for this is that the focus of the case study is on EU institutions when member states are, in fact, the main drivers of energy policy-making in the EU.

5.1. Energy Wars during the Cold War era

5.1.1 Monitoring Moscow's growing relative power?

States, and especially great powers, tend to compete to ensure the predominance of their interests inside and outside their borders (Mearsheimer, 2011). The US-Soviet competition for influence in Europe is the most notable in the post-World War II era. As demonstrated in Chapter Five, Europe has been an area of critical interest to both Washington and Moscow. This became more evident after the end of World War II when both states attempted to increase their influence over European nations and at the same time contain the influence of rival states.

At the end of World War II, the United States left occupation forces in Europe to prevent Soviet dominance in a region of strategic interest to Washington (ibid). The forces were kept by the US to ensure that the Soviet Union would not attempt to expand its control over Western Europe. There were serious concerns that in such a case, European powers would

not be able to contain the Red Army, considering the condition of their economies and armies at the end of World War II (ibid). It is important to mention that the author comes to the conclusion that the US's primary interest in keeping the forces in Europe was not peace but to prevent the Soviet Union from achieving pan-European hegemony, with peace being just a positive side effect (ibid).

Concerns over the expansion of Soviet influence in Europe were not limited to the early post-World War II era; they continued throughout the entire period of the Cold War. This is evident in hundreds of CIA intelligence assessments dating back to the Cold War Era. However, according to official documents, Soviet military power was not the only type of threat that endangered Washington's interests in Europe and elsewhere. Hundreds of declassified intelligence documents demonstrate that the US was also aware of the increasing threat that east-west trade, and in particular the energy trade between the Soviet Union and Europe, posed to its national security.

5.1.2. The Red Oil Offensive

From the mid-1950s, the Soviet Union began flooding the European market with increasing volumes of cheap oil (Perović, 2017). For example, in 1955, Moscow exported 116,000 barrels of oil a day to the West, and by 1960 this had risen to 486,000 barrels, making the Soviet Union the second largest producer of oil after the US. By 1965 Soviet exports rose further to 1,020,000 barrels a day (Stent, 2003). Stent highlights that by 1961 red oil exports made about 4 per cent of the total world sales. Seventy per cent of that oil went to the West, with Italy, Japan and Germany receiving four per cent of these exports. The author also notes that the Soviets were selling crude oil to Europe at a price ($ 1.71) significantly lower than the world market price ($2.56) to increase their income in hard currency (ibid, 98).

According to Perović (2017, 11), at that time, the 'quantities shipped to Western Europe were still relatively modest', and the income from oil exports was 'too low to raise any questions of dependence, or even interdependence, in the Soviet-West European energy relations'. Even in the case of a deterioration of Soviet-Western Europe relations, a surplus supply of oil would allow Europeans to switch to other suppliers easily (ibid).

However, evidence shows that Washington was nevertheless alarmed by the export of cheap Russian oil to Europe. This is evident in the 1961 US Senate transcript titled *Soviet Oil in the Cold War*. In this document, Halford Hoskins, a senior advisor in international relations, argued that Soviet oil exports constituted 'a political hand that has worn the economic glove' (US Senate, 1961, 4). Another document, the US Senate Hearing transcript, dated July 3, 1962, cites Senator Kenneth Keating warning that the 'Soviets are dumping oil at a bargain price for political and military reasons' (US Senate, 1962, 1).

Despite US warnings, however, the increased demand for Soviet oil led to renewed interest in the expansion of Soviet energy infrastructure to Western Europe (Lee and Connolly, 2016). However, steel shortages, and the lack of technology for building large-diameter pipes and compressors in the Soviet Union, made the construction of an oil pipeline impossible, thus forcing Moscow to seek partnerships with Western governments and companies (Lee and Connolly, 2016). For example, in 1960, the Soyuznefteexport (SNE), the Soviet oil-export monopoly, signed an 'oil-for-technology supply' contract with the Ente Nazionale Idrocarburi (ENI), the Italian public oil company (Gazprom, 2009). As per the contract, Moscow would provide ENI with 12 million tonnes of crude oil over four years in 'exchange for 240 thousand tons of large diameter pipes and equipment for oil pipelines, as well as 50 thousand tons of synthetic rubber' (Gazprom, 2009).

Similarly, in 1962 the Soviet Union signed a $28 million contract with West Germany to import an estimated 163,000 tonnes of large diameter pipes (Lee and Connolly, 2016). Lee

and Connolly (2016) note that, in the 1960s, West Germany's economy was more dependent on revenues from the export of steel pipes to the Soviet Union than on Soviet oil. These contracts between the Soviet Union and the Western European countries led to tensions between the United States and its European allies.

These tensions grew further during the construction of the Druzhba (Friendship) pipeline, one of the biggest crude oil pipelines in the world, transferring oil from the eastern part of European Russia to Ukraine, Belarus, Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Germany. Europeans saw energy partnership with Russia as a way to reduce their reliance on Arab oil. However, Washington claimed that excessive dependence on Soviet oil would leave Western Europe vulnerable to Soviet political pressure.

A transcript of the US Senate Hearing demonstrates that Washington was convinced that Soviet oil exports to Western Europe had a military-political aim (US Senate, 1962, 1). The prevailing idea was that since there was a surplus of oil in Europe, the construction of the Druzhba pipeline did not make economic sense. Thus, the pipeline was seen in the US as a political tool.

In this context, the US attempted to suspend the pipeline project by pressuring its European allies to cancel the export of large-diameter pipes to the Soviet Union. Initially, Washington channelled its complaints through the Coordination Committee for Multilateral Export Controls (CoCom) - a multilateral institution established in 1949 to prevent the transfer of strategic technologies to states like the Soviet Union, other Warsaw Pact nations and China. However, they could not reach an agreement over listing pipes among other banned export technologies (Lee and Connolly, 2016).

However, in November 1962, following a year of unsuccessful efforts in the aftermath of the Cuban missile crisis, the US managed to pass a secret embargo resolution through NATO (Stent, 1981), which strongly encouraged NATO members to suspend the export of large-

diameter pipes and pipeline technology to Moscow and its allies (ibid). Cantoni (2016) notes that the suggestion followed the publication of a NATO Study Group report in 1961, which urged the implementation of restrictive measures to be taken due to substantial oil trade between the Soviet Union and NATO and non-NATO members.

Washington aimed to suspend the construction of the Druzhba oil pipeline; however, the US sanctions only managed to delay the construction by one year, as West Germany was the only European country that complied with US directions. Britain and Italy did not abide by the NATO resolution. They interpreted it as a recommendation rather than an order, thus honouring their contract with Moscow. Eventually, the embargo proved to be counterproductive for US foreign policy, as it had a detrimental impact on Washington's relations with its European allies (Stent, 1981).

Stent notes that the motivation behind the US embargo was predominantly political and strategic (ibid). The author suggests that the 'State Department felt that the development of the oil-exporting industry represented a strategic-political threat, and it was also concerned about the cohesion of the NATO alliance on matters of East-West trade' (ibid, 104). There is no doubt that oil companies also placed pressure on the government, as demonstrated by Cantoni (2016). Nevertheless, Stent correctly points out that Washington's course of action was primarily determined by political factors (Stent, 1981). Declassified intelligence reports used for this research project confirm this claim.

In November 1966, NATO lifted the embargo on large-diameter pipes after pressure from its allies (Perović, 2017). At that time, the West was no longer concerned with the threats emanating from the reliance of Western Europe on Soviet oil. The focus was on possible oil shortages in the Soviet Union caused by increased domestic demand, commitments to subsidise energy flows to the Eastern bloc, and declining growth rates (Perović, 2017; Cantoni 2016). In

this context, by the late 1970s, the expansion of Soviet energy infrastructure to Western Europe was no longer seen as a threat.

The impact of détente (1967 to 1979), the easing of strained relations between the US and the Soviet Union on EC-Soviet and US-Soviet relations was apparent in the trade flows during these years (Perović, 2017). Following the 1973-74 energy crisis, the Soviet Union regained significance as many Western European states began to see Moscow as a more reliable energy supplier than the Middle East. At this time, even Washington considered a proposal to import Soviet gas, while several US companies considered participation in the Western Siberia natural gas project (ibid). However, the deterioration in US-Soviet relations beginning in the mid-1970s ended any hopes for US participation in Soviet energy projects.

5.1.3. The Soviet Gas Offensive?

The oil crisis of 1973-74 led to an increase in gas demand, which increasingly became a substitute for oil and coal in Europe. With the largest proven reserves of natural gas in the world, Europeans saw their energy partnership with the Soviet Union in the 1970s and 1980s as an opportunity to reduce their reliance on Arab oil (ibid, 2017).

The discovery of huge gas reserves in Siberia, unlike any previously discovered in the Soviet Union, allowed for the ‘gasification’ of the Soviet Union to ‘save’ oil for highly profitable exports abroad (ibid, 2017). Whereas at the beginning of the 1970s, Moscow earned twenty per cent of its hard currency from oil exports, with the rise in oil prices and increased export volumes by the mid-1970s, this figure rose to fifty per cent. The size of the Siberian gas deposits allowed the Soviet Union to use gas as a substitute for oil in domestic uses and encouraged the idea of building an export pipeline from Western Siberia to Europe.

Five European countries, Austria, France, West Germany, Italy and Switzerland, signed contracts to purchase Soviet gas (Dahl, 2015). These agreements involved the construction of a 2,760-mile pipeline from the Urengoy gas fields in Siberia to Czechoslovakia via Ukraine, tying into the 'Urengoy-Pomary-Uzhgorod' pipeline, which has been named the 'Brotherhood pipeline' system (Bratstvo) (ibid, 2015).

However, the plans for the construction of the Brotherhood pipeline found the United States in complete disagreement. As demonstrated by declassified US intelligence assessments dating back to 1981 and 1982, Americans viewed the pipeline as a threat to their interests in Europe. For example, a CIA Memorandum prepared for a National Security Council meeting held on July 8, 1981, highlights Washington's worries over the construction of the Siberia-to-Western Europe pipeline (now known as the Brotherhood pipeline). The Memorandum proposed that the US should persuade the Europeans to refrain from signing an agreement on the pipeline or at least that this decision should be delayed until a joint study on European Energy Security was conducted. The intelligence assessment lists nine arguments that the US Administration can make to dissuade Europeans.

The first is that the 'pipeline will improve future Soviet economic growth and facilitate a military build-up which the West (especially the US) will have to counter' (The Director of Central Intelligence, 1981, 2). According to the intelligence assessment, this was expected to be 'the most compelling argument to the Europeans' (The Director of Central Intelligence, 1981, 2). Another argument focuses on the fact that the earnings from the Siberian pipeline would replace Soviet hard currency earnings from oil, which were expected to dry up between 1985 and 1990. The construction of the Siberian pipeline would thus reduce hard currency spending from $24 billion to $12 billion and increase Soviet influence over partnering countries (The Director of Central Intelligence, 1981, 2).

Although, according to the document, the pipeline project would not eliminate Soviet economic problems, it could 'ease the strain considerably in key sectors and thus facilitate military effort' (ibid). This is because hard currency earnings 'from the project could maintain the Soviets' imports capacity in the face of declining oil revenues', permitting the Soviets to continue imports of Western machinery and equipment (ibid). Additionally, technology transfer associated with the project would benefit domestic gas production by enabling the Soviets to acquire extraction and processing equipment that the USSR 'cannot match in quality nor produce in the quantities required' (ibid). Thus, the pipeline project was expected to 'aid the military effort' in two ways. First, revenues would be used to import equipment that was likely to be used in military systems. Second, other imports could be 'directed to civilian uses, reducing pressure on the defence industries to switch to non-military products' (ibid).

In contrast, the collapse of the Siberia-to-Western Europe pipeline agreement 'could significantly increase Soviet long-range economic problems and the difficulty of maintaining the current pace of their military programmes' (ibid). The fall in hard currency earnings would lead to 'major cuts in the purchase of energy and of Western goods that cushion the defence effort' (ibid). Also, it was expected to hurt the defence-related industries directly as they use much of the imported machinery and equipment (ibid).

Intelligence assessments prepared in 1981 by the National Foreign Assessment Centre, and in 1982 by the Director of Central Intelligence, under the titles *USSR-Western Europe Implications of the Siberia-to Europe Gas Pipeline* and *Outlook for the Siberia-to-Western Europe Natural Gas Pipeline* respectively, also demonstrate Washington's concerns over the expansion of Soviet energy infrastructure in Europe. The main aim of these documents was to assess the potential impact of the growing Soviet-European partnership on US national security interests and provide the US administration with evidence-based advice on how to respond to this development.

Another intelligence assessment, titled *The Soviet Gas Pipeline in Perspective – Special National Intelligence Estimate*, refers to US concerns over the possibility that the Soviets might exploit European energy dependence to gain an increased role in European politics (Director of Central Intelligence, 1982a). According to the report, Moscow estimated that the increased reliance of the West European countries on Soviet gas supplies would increase their vulnerability to Soviet coercion, thus making it 'a permanent factor in their decision-making on East-West issues' (Director of Central Intelligence 1982a, 20).

However, the dominant view in the US press in the early 1980s was that European dependence on Soviet energy resources was not the primary concern of the US government, as was often presented. Some sources back then suspected that Washington was 'equally interested in depriving the Soviet Union of a long-term source of hard currency income' (Schmeman, 1982, 6). This was evident by the fact that Reagan's efforts to prevent foreign exchange earnings from the pipeline were seen 'by administration officials as a major victory for Pentagon and White House officials who favour intensified economic warfare against the Soviet Union' (Gelb, 1982).

However, *The Soviet Gas Pipeline in Perspective – Special National Intelligence Estimate,* when referring to the financial difficulties Moscow faced, suggests that despite Reagan's attempts, they had little to do with US policies. The document attributes Moscow's economic troubles to the sharp fall in world oil prices and estimates that 'Moscow's best hope of improving its strained hard currency position, in the long run, is to secure the cooperation of Western Europe in building large pipelines for the delivery of additional natural gas in the late 1980s or the 1990s' (Director of Central Intelligence 1982a, 4). According to the report, there was a potential uncovered gas demand in Western Europe that could fill not only the pipeline that was under construction at that time but also second and third strands later (ibid).

And with its size of gas reserves and incentives to increase its income in hard currency, the Soviet Union could sell to Europeans as much gas as they could take.

Furthermore, this Report also refers to the dangers that the EU-Soviet trade and energy partnership could pose for the United States, suggesting that Moscow had 'used the pipeline issue to create and exploit divisions between Western Europe and the United States' (Director of Central Intelligence 1982a, 20). In fact, the report suggests that that in 'the past, the Soviets have used West European interests in expanding East-West commerce to undercut US sanctions', and they believed that successful pipeline projects 'could reduce European willingness to support future US economic sanctions against the USSR' (ibid).

This belief also dominates the press of the era. For example, Schmeman's article in the New York Times claims that 'using trade and defence differences to drive a wedge between the United States and European allies has been a major Soviet foreign policy goal over the past year' (Schmeman, 1982).

However, convincing European states had not been an easy task for the US. The intelligence assessment highlights the unwillingness of the West Europeans to cooperate and identifies political consideration along with economic incentive as reasons that 'continue to limit West European cooperation with the United States in restricting East-West trade' (Director of Central Intelligence, 1982a, 4). According to the report, the problem lay in the fact that the Europeans could not understand the 'strategic implications of East-West trade' and, on that basis, refused to conduct economic warfare against the Soviet Union (ibid). Yet, the intelligence services expected that an 'adequate analysis and discussion' with the allies could convince them that the lack of security strategy could possibly lead to an increased Soviet role in Europe's energy security' (Director of Central Intelligence 1982a, 5). In this context, the document suggests that restricting trade and cooperation with the Soviet Union should not be seen as economic warfare but rather as a 'self-protection policy' (ibid).

The report also stated that unless European allies restricted further cooperation with the Soviet Union, including withholding from importing gas and oil and providing the Soviets with the necessary oil and gas technology, their governments would be forced to raise the cost of defence by imposing heavy taxes on their citizens, to counter a stronger Soviet Union. This is because their partnership with the Soviet Union was the primary source of income in hard currency for Moscow. Such income was then invested in the Soviet economy and military sector, helping Moscow's military build-up (National Foreign Assessment Center, 1981; Director of Central Intelligence, 1982a). In turn, a militarily strong Soviet Union would constitute a threat to collective security (National Foreign Assessment Center, 1981; Director of Central Intelligence, 1982a).

Thus, according to US intelligence, the most effective way of preventing Moscow's military build-up was to restrict the East-West trade partnerships. The Soviet Union would then have to 'retard major improvements in Soviet weaponry', as the limited ability to earn hard currency would force Moscow to prioritise between investing in military and economic programmes (Director of Central Intelligence 1982a, 7).

These reports, written almost forty years ago, demonstrate that Washington was alarmed at the prospect of Moscow's increasing relative power in Europe vis-à-vis the United States, both in terms of military capabilities and influence. In order to prevent the increase in Moscow's relative power, the US leadership, besides its efforts to convince its European partners from signing energy agreements with Moscow, took several other actions. These aimed to delay or even suspend the expansion of Soviet energy infrastructure to Europe.

In December 1981, US President Ronald Reagan 'banned the supply of all energy-related equipment to the USSR by US companies, foreign affiliates, and foreign companies with US patents and licensing' (Congressional Reference Division, 1982, 2). These systematic efforts aimed at preventing his European allies from selling their much-needed gas technology

to the Soviet Union for the construction of a 3,700-mile gas pipeline from Siberia to West Germany in the early ’80s; a pipeline that would supply Germany, France, Italy and Spain with up to 30 per cent of their natural gas consumption (Gelb, 1982).

For example, the Reagan administration barred General Electric from allowing the European companies AEG-Kanis (Germany), John Brown (UK), Alsthom-Atlantique (France) and Nuovo Pignone (Italy) to incorporate US technology and components into turbine compressors which were sold to Moscow (CIA, 1982; Congressional Reference Division 1982; O’Sullivan, 2008; Gelb 1982). Direct sales of Caterpillar pipe-layers were also banned (Gelb, 1982).

American sanctions were described as the ‘toughest option’ presented to the President during a Security Council Meeting but an option that would delay the construction of the pipeline from ‘one to three years’ and ‘increase the costs’ (Gelb 1982, A1 33).

However, US efforts only delayed the sale of pipes and other equipment to the Soviets for the construction of the gas line to Europe (CIA 1982, Schmemann 1982). Most of the European companies selling steel pipe and components for compressors refused to comply with the US order ‘on legal and policy grounds’ (CRD 1982, 3). European governments had the power to block the regulation from applying to companies within their jurisdictions and thus to protect these companies from American legal action (Gelb, 1982, A1 33). At the same time, legal experts suggested that General Electric could challenge Reagan’s regulations in the courts in the US. However, eventually, on June 18, 1982, General Electric’s spokesman reported that the company would comply with US regulations.

In response to US sanctions, the Soviet Union announced the construction of its own 25 MU gas turbine. However, Moscow informed Western companies that ‘they expected them to adhere to their contracts’ (CRD, 1982) and sent Vassily Dinkov, the gas minister, to press their European contractors to find a way to avoid the sanctions (Schmemann, 1982).

Despite US efforts, the pipeline was built over the period 1982-1984. It was the first major natural gas export line built during the Cold War era (Gazprom archives, 2019). The 'Brotherhood' and 'Soyuz' pipelines supplied gas from Western Siberian routes, including the Urengoy area, Russian Ural Fields and Central Asia, to Europe via Ukraine.

Overall, Washington's efforts to contain the expansion of Soviet energy infrastructure to Europe during the Cold War comes as no surprise. By targeting the Soviet energy sector, one of the main sources of Moscow's power, the US sought to ensure the predominance of its interests in Europe and contain the growing power of its rival.

The end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union were expected to end US-Russian security competition. However, if that were the case, the expansion of Russian energy infrastructure to Europe in the post-Cold War era would not be interpreted as a threat to US interests in the region. Evidence demonstrates that this was not the case. Russia's economic revival in the 2000s, largely attributed to energy exports to Europe, led to a new round of US interference in the EU-Russian energy partnership. Both Washington and Moscow still consider Europe an area of strategic importance and compete for influence over the European states. Their clashing national security interests seems to have shaped the development of a common European energy security policy.

The next section will examine the Russian energy policy in the post-Cold War era and will then investigate how the US interprets and reacts to Russian gas exports. In order to explain how Washington and Moscow translate systemic incentives and threats into policy decisions, our analysis will focus on two intervening variables that condition how states respond to systemic pressure. These are the leaders' images and the strategic culture.

5.2 Level 1: Great Power Level (Post-Cold War Era)

5.2.1 Russian Energy Policy

After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, the new Russian state (called the Russian Federation) was plunged into chaos (political turmoil, hyperinflation, Chechnya war). The country's energy industry was also in disarray, and without a doubt, Russia needed a new energy policy.

In the early 1990s, Russia accounted for more than forty-five per cent of the world's natural gas reserves, twenty-three per cent of coal reserves, fourteen per cent of uranium reserves and thirteen per cent of oil reserves, although later, these numbers decreased (Mastepanov, 2009). Its vast energy resources would soon allow for the economic recovery of the country and its re-emergence as one of the one world's leading powers. In this context, the next section will look into Russia's energy strategy in the early post-Cold War era.

The Russian energy strategy was developed in several stages. The first stage involved the formulation of the Energy Policy Concept of Russia in the New Economic Conditions, in 1992, which was approved by Government Resolution No 26, 10/09/1992. This document stressed the need for the development of a new Russian energy policy, taking into consideration the domestic, regional and international realities resulting from the collapse of the Soviet Union. These, among other issues, included the radical changes in the socio-political system of the newly independent Russia, the deteriorating economic situation, the new geopolitical position of the country, and the adopted course of Russia's integration in the world economy. The new Russian energy policy aimed to promote energy efficiency in Russia, to ensure reliable and safe energy supply to Russian citizens, to maintain the export potential of the fuel-and-energy complex, and to improve its structure to revive the country's economy (Matepanov, 2009),

This was followed in 1995 by the approval of the Major Directions of Energy Strategy of Russia for the period up to 2010, and later in the same year by the adoption of the Major Provisions of the Energy Strategy of Russia for the period up to 2010. Later, in 1998, after realising the necessity of monitoring the implementation of these strategic documents, the Ministry of Fuel and Energy established a new agency responsible for this task, the State Institute of Energy Strategy (IES). The IES was focused on long-term forecasts of the development of the fuel and energy complex in connection with socio-economic development trends in the country.

In the meantime, the liberalisation of the Russian energy sector that had started in the late 1980s under Mikhail Gorbachev 'was taken to an extreme' under the presidency of Boris Yeltsin (Goodrich, 2013). The consequence of this liberalisation was the privatisation of the previously owned energy companies by Russian oligarchs and foreign groups. This, in turn, led to a substantial fall in energy production (Goodrich, 2013).

In 1989, the Soviet Ministry of Gas was restructured into the State Gas Concern Gazprom, currently Russia's largest firm responsible for the extraction, production, transportation and sales of natural gas. Later, following the Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of November 1992 and the Resolution of the Government of Russia of February 17 1993, Gazprom was reorganised into a joint-stock company, RAO Gazprom, and opened up to investors (Gazprom, 2019). However, during Yeltsin's presidency, the company was known for its opaque decision-making practices, corruption and scandals.

Russia's energy sector and energy policy changed dramatically following Vladimir Putin's election as President in 2000. According to Brown (2004, 10), this change was 'more of form than of content'. In other words, although the role and the power which the Russian oligarchs enjoyed during the Yeltsin era was altered, favoured oligarchs and groups still maintained a significant impact on Russian politics (ibid). When Putin brought the key energy

companies back under state control, he amalgamated the majority of the firms in the energy sector under three energy giants: Gazprom, Rosneft and Transneft, and he 'put his friends in positions of power' (Maness and Valeriano 2015, 11-12). Thus, the 'leadership of the state-controlled Russian oil and gas firms' were 'dominated by former members of the Russian intelligence service' or by others personally close to the President (Woehrel, 2009, 2).

In May 2003, the government approved the new Russian Energy Strategy for the period up to 2020 (ES-2020). The ES-2020 is proof that the Russian foreign policy executive viewed the country's energy sector as a major source of its economic and political power. This is evident in the sections that highlight that Russia's energy resources and powerful fuel-and-energy complex constitute the basis for economic development and can be used as a 'tool for conducting internal and external politics' (MoE, 2003, 3). Internally, the effective use of the FEC was expected to 'create the necessary conditions for putting the country's economy on a sustainable growth path, ensuring prosperity and raising the standard of living of the population' (ibid). Externally, it was expected to increase Russian influence abroad.

Indeed, in the following years (1999-2008), the country experienced strong economic growth. Over this period, GDP increased by 6.9% on average per year, the unemployment rate declined from 12.6% to 6.3%, and the real disposable income of Russians grew by 7.9% (Cooper, 2009). Earnings from energy exports rose from $28 billion in 1998 to $217 billion by 2007 (Aggarwal and Govella, 2011). High oil and gas prices allowed Russia to build up its currency reserves and start repaying its debts (Trenin, 2006). The revival of the Russian economy in the 2000s, in turn, allowed the Kremlin to increase defence spending substantially. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, military spending rose from $24.3 billion in 2000 to $40.1 billion in 2006.

Externally, according to the document, Russia's geopolitical position and influence largely depended on the country's role in the world energy markets (MoE, 2003). In that

context, the document places a great deal of importance on the development of transport infrastructure that will increase Russia's export abilities. The ES-2020 also emphasises the role of the state in achieving these goals. More specifically, it highlights that the state will foster the participation of joint-stock companies in the construction of major oil and gas pipeline projects both in the West and East (MoE, 2003, 12).

Indeed, as indicated in the Energy Strategy, Russia put significant effort into the expansion of gas infrastructures in Europe in years to come. The expansion of Russian gas pipelines to Europe allowed for the delivery of additional volumes of Russian natural gas to Central Europe. Although Central European countries saw the additional volumes of gas delivered to Europe and their energy partnership with Russia as a way to enhance their energy security, by the mid-2000s, increased dependence on Russian gas to Europe raised concerns in Washington.

In this context, the next section will discuss the US view of Russian energy policy in the early Post-Cold War era to shed light on the clashing national security interests of the two powers.

5.3 US view of Russian energy policy

According to Celeste Wallander, a senior fellow at the Council of Foreign Relations, 'the baseline assumption guiding US policy' in the early post-Soviet period was that Russia was weak and would 'remain so for some time to come' (Wallander, 2001, 1). Wallander, who interviewed high officials responsible or soon to be responsible for formulating US policy towards Russia, argued that Bush Administration officials were aware that 'Russia's vast natural resources, human capital, and Eurasian presence [were] sources of potential greatness'

(ibid). However, according to the author, they argued ‘that potential [had] not been realised and [would] not be realised in the short and medium term’ (ibid).

Despite that, in his written Testimony in 2014, Amos J. Hochstein, the US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Energy Diplomacy, noted that the US government had been concerned about Europe’s reliance on Russian energy resources since the late 1990s (US Senate, 2014). For example, he referred to the US participation in negotiations that ‘made the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline a reality despite the scepticism of experts who said Azerbaijani oil would never flow to European markets’ (US Senate, 2014). However, the evidence in the next section will demonstrate that the US considered Russia too weak to pose a serious threat to its interests for a long time.

In 2002, Thomas E. Graham, who was the Director of Russian Affairs on the National Security Council from 2002 to 2004 (and later a special assistant to President George W. Bush and a Senior Director for Russia on the National Security Council from 2004-2007), claimed that Russia was so weak that its recovery was unlikely (Graham Jr., 2002). A weak Russia was not considered a threat to the United States (Wallander, 2001; Spanger, 2008). Based on that assumption, Bush’s perception was that there was ‘no need to pay much attention to Moscow and its interests’ (Spanger, 2008, 51) and certainly no need for a policy to limit Russian energy exports to Europe. Bush perceived Russia mainly ‘through the prism of other problems, such as nuclear proliferation’ (Spanger, 2008, 52), European security, Caspian energy resources, and China (Graham Jr., 2000).

US policymakers’ perceptions of Russia’s cooperation with European countries had also changed in the post-Cold War era. In the past, the Soviet-European trade and energy partnership had raised concerns in Washington, but at that time this was ‘little cause for concern, as long as transatlantic relations remain[ed] close’ (Wallander, 2001, 3). Then, however, Russia’s relations with the ex-Soviet states were seen as ‘a major concern of US

policy' (Wallander, 2001, 4). The Policy Memo points out that there were two intertwined reasons for this. The first reason was 'the principled stake the US had in the independence and sovereignty of these countries' while the second factor was related to Washington's perception that Russia's 'transition from its Soviet past' cannot be considered as positive if there are efforts of 'subjugation or even domination of its neighbours' economic and political affairs' (Wallander 2001, 4).

The fact that Russia was not seen as a threat to the United States in the early 2000s is evident from the testimonies of the Director of Central Intelligence in 1998 and 2001. The focus in 2001, according to the Director of Central Intelligence, George J. Tenet, was on

> new communications technology that enables the efforts of terrorists and narco-traffickers as surely as it aids law enforcement and intelligence, rapid global population growth that will create new strains in parts of the world least able to cope, the weakening internal bonds in a number of states whose cohesion can no longer be taken for granted, the breaking down of old barriers to change in places like the Koreas and Iran, the accelerating growth in missile capabilities in so many parts of the world—to name just a few (Tenet, 2001).

However, Tenet suggested that the highest priority 'must invariably be on those things that threaten the lives of Americans or the physical security of the United States' (CIA, 2001). These, according to the Director of Central Intelligence, 'were the challenges posed by international terrorism' (Tenet, 2001).

In his testimony before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence on The Worldwide Threat 2001: National Security in a Changing World, Tenet highlighted that there 'can be little doubt that President Putin wants to restore some aspects of the Soviet past—[its] status as a great power, strong central authority, and a stable and predictable society', and to resurrect the 'Soviet-era zero-sum approach to foreign policy…check US influence in the other former Soviet states and re-establish Russia as the premier power in the region' (Tenet, 2001). While he was aware that Moscow 'has also increased funding for the military', he reassured the

Committee that ‘years of increases would be needed to deal with the backlog of problems that built up in the armed forces under Yeltsin’ (Tenet, 2001).

When in 2001 Tenet referred to the fact that Russia ‘enjoyed an economic upturn’ in 2000 ‘buoyed by high oil prices and the cheap rouble’, he did not expect these ‘trends to last permanently’ (Tenet, 2001). However, by 2003, it became clear that the income from energy exports allowed the Kremlin to ‘pay down the country’s external public-sector debt to a moderate level of 40 per cent of GDP, half the level of only a few years ago’ (Tenet, 2003). The realisation that Russia’s energy sector was the driving force behind the growth of the Russian economy, and in turn of its relative power vis-à-vis the United States, would lead to Washington’s reconsideration of its policy towards the EU-Russian energy partnership.

Only a year later, in 2004, Tenet, for the first time, refers to Russia’s assertive energy diplomacy towards its former Soviet neighbours such as Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova. While he attributes the assertiveness primarily to ‘commercial motives’ driven by Russian companies, he suggested that these were ‘in line with the Kremlin’s agenda’ (Tenet, 2004). According to Tenet, the ‘Kremlin’s increasing assertiveness [was] partly grounded in growing confidence in its military capabilities’, which were ‘beginning to rebound from the 1990s nadir’ as defence spending was increasing (Tenet, 2004). Overall, his view was that ‘Russia’s relations with the US continue to contain elements of both cooperation and competition. On balance, they remain more cooperative than not, but the coming years will present serious challenges’ (Tenet, 2004).

By 2004, Tenet not only was aware of the importance of the energy sector for the Russian economy and military sector, but he was also aware of the fact that energy had proved to be a handy foreign policy tool in the hands of the Russian leadership, a tool that could be used to regain influence over the post-Soviet space.

Tenet's remarks are extremely important, as they demonstrate that Washington had begun to realise the importance of the energy sector not only for the restoration of Russia's economy but also for the country's geopolitical resurgence.

In sum, following the end of the Cold War, Washington at first did not view Russia as a potential threat to the United States. US policymakers were convinced that the Kremlin was weak and would remain so for a long time. Interestingly, while the testimonies discussed above demonstrate that the US Intelligence services were aware that Russia's energy exports were allowing for the recovery of the country's economy and the modernisation of its military sector, the assumption that Moscow could re-emerge as a threat to the US and its interests in Europe was only articulated as late as 2003-2004.

In the absence of US pressure on European states in the early post-Cold war era, bilateral agreements between major European countries and Russia led to increased imports of natural gas to Europe and plans for the construction of several gas pipelines running from Russia to Europe. At this time, EU member states saw Russia as a reliable energy supplier and their partnership with Moscow as doing 'business as usual'.

However, the deterioration of relations between Russia and the West after the mid-2000s led to discussions on the development of a common European energy policy; external events provided the window opportunity to all those who advocated the creation of a common energy policy in the EU. The next section will briefly introduce the main developments in the European energy sector since the first treaties of the EU were signed. It will then examine the evolution of energy policy in Europe between early 1990 and 2019, focusing on member states' and European Commission' images, and strategic culture as intervening variables.

5.4 The Intra-EU Level

5.4.1 European energy policy between 1951 and 1990

Energy was at the heart of the EU sixty-nine years ago, with the European Coal and Steel Community Treaty (ECSC) signed on April 18, 1951, in Paris. With its entry into force, it established a common market for coal and steel. Six years later, on March 25, 1957, a second energy-related treaty, the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom), was signed in Rome. According to Duffield and Birchfield (2011), the expectation was that the atom would become an additional source of energy, thus leading to the diversification of sources and the growth of the nuclear industry, especially in the light of the Suez crisis.

The ECSC and Euratom 'were and are unique in that they provide for a common policy with specific energy policy tools based on exclusive supranational powers vested in a central authority' (Andoura, Hancher and Van der Woude, 2010, 18). This was not the case with the European Economic Community Treaty (EEC) and the successive amending treaties, including the Single European Act, Maastricht, Amsterdam and Nice (ibid). Duffield and Birchfield, however, note that the 1958-1959 coal crisis exposed the institutional limitation of the ECSC when the member states blocked the 'recommendations of the High Authority [the executive branch of the European Coal and Steel Community] for addressing an acute excess of supply' (Dunffield and Bierchfield, 2011, 3). The ECSC also gradually became marginalised because of the decline in the use of coal in the 1960s and the rise in the use of oil that surpassed coal by the mid-1960s. By the 1970s, oil accounted for 60 per cent of primary consumption while coal made up just 25 per cent. At the same time, the use of natural gas was rapidly rising (Dunffield and Birchfield, 2011).

However, Duffield and Birchfield (2011, 3) correctly note that despite the 'tectonic shift in the energy mix', the 'institutional powers of the evolving European communities were never

updated to reflect' this change. Community institutions were not given jurisdiction in the area of oil or natural gas or any energy policy-making powers.

According to the authors, this lacuna cannot be attributed to a lack of interest in creating European energy policy or to a lack of effort. There were efforts to establish a more general European energy policy between the mid-1950s and mid-1990s; the problem was that none of these efforts came to fruition (ibid, 3).

The authors provide several examples of the efforts made to facilitate a European energy policy.

> The issue of bringing about the integration of the conventional energy sector was raised at the 1955 Messina conference, which was intended to revive the integration process after the failure of the European Defense Community, the previous year. However, it was quickly dropped in favour of a narrow focus on atomic energy. (Duffield and Birchfield, 2011, 3)

Then,

> In the early 1960s, the Member States tasked an Inter-Executive Working Party on Energy with defining a community energy policy, but the resulting memorandum on the subject was not translated into explicit policy (ibid).

Later,

> In 1968, the recently merged Commission, on its own initiative, presented its "First Guidelines for a Community Energy Policy", which laid out the case for such a policy and offered a number of concrete measures for creating a common market in the energy sector, but the Council of Ministers could agree on only a set of general principles (ibid, 3-4)

According to Jasinki and Pfaffenberger (2000), the Commission's 1968 proposal marked the peak of its market-oriented energy policy. From the 1970s onwards, its proposals reflected a significant shift towards energy supply security. This can be explained by the growing reliance on imports, particularly oil, and the changes in the global energy market. In any case, it could be argued that all that was achieved by the mid-1970s was an agreement on what the general parameters should be, without reference to specific policy instruments (Duffield and Birchfield,

2011). This, in turn, left the European Community (EC) incapable of handling energy crises, as became evident during the oil shocks of the 1970s.

The unilateral responses of member states to the 1973 oil embargo demonstrated that there was a lack of coordination on matters related to energy security and foreign energy policy in Europe. Due to the lack of the ability to deal with a major crisis, the European response to the 1973 Arab oil embargo largely relied on the framework proposed by the United States through the International Energy Agency (IEA) (Prontera, 2017). Martin and El-Agraa (2007, 316) note that the International Energy Agency, formed in 1974, 'overshadowed the EC both in breadth of membership (covering all the OECD countries except France) and in terms of its powers on oil sharing in a new crisis'.

Even so, the first oil shock prompted the reassessment of energy policy in Europe, which led to the adoption of a new energy policy strategy for the Community (COM(74) 550 final/2) following the Commission's communication and proposal of June 5, 1974 (Commission of the European Communities, 1974). According to Martin and El-Agraa (2007, 316), the New Strategy was adopted after 'much wrangling and dilution'. However, it envisaged several long-term goals to be met by 1985. The goals included the reduction of oil consumption and a degree of Community energy dependence on outside sources. It also aimed to increase domestic energy production, especially nuclear power, and encourage rational energy consumption (Commission of the European Communities, 1974, 10a).

New rounds of policy goals were agreed in 1979 and 1986, with targets to be met by 1990 and 1995 respectively, with each building on the previous one (Jasinki and Pfaffenberger, 2000). In general, the goals appeared to be on target. However, according to Jasinki and Pfaffenberger (2000), a degree of failure was recorded in some cases either across the European Community (EC) or in certain EC member states.

Thus, by the mid-1980s, the Commission managed to establish a place in energy policy-making (Martin and El-Agraa, 2007). Although the Commission was not influential enough to dictate the establishment of a common energy market and its role was not central to member states in terms of their energy policy agendas, its remit included information gathering, target setting and the promotion of programmes on energy.

In any case, although these measures ensured that the Commission had a say on European energy policy, some of the objectives set showed few signs of achievement (Jasinki and Pfaffenberger, 2000). At the same time, aside from a few legislative measures, the energy policy-making powers remained exclusively with member states, which were not willing to share or transfer any energy policy-making powers to the Commission (Martin and El-Agraa, 2007). In any case, it is important to highlight that the Council and the Member States largely ignored the Commission's recommendations until the 1990s (Maltby, 2013).

Overall, in the course of the 1980s, the global energy landscape changed significantly. The drop in the price of oil, the availability of new resources from the Soviet Union, the increase in domestic production, and the use of nuclear energy in several major countries contributed to a turnaround in EC energy policy (Prontera, 2017). Around this time, the European Commission 'embraced the idea to promote closer integration among the energy markets of the member states, liberalisation and limited competition' (Prontera, 2017, 9). This new mood was reflected in the publication of several Communications that stressed the need for joint energy policy (Duffield and Birchfield, 2011).

In 1986, European countries signed the Single European Act (SEA), which aimed to establish an internal market by 1992. To achieve this, the Commission launched an ambitious plan: the construction of the Internal Energy Market (EC, 1998). The document treated the energy sector just like any other economic sector, and it put forward new measures to fully integrate the national electricity and gas markets (Prontera, 2017; Bower, 2002). While the

European oil markets were moving towards greater liberalisation by the mid-1980s, the electricity and gas sectors, which were sheltered from these pressures and still largely state-controlled, required the much more active promotion of a market-oriented approach (Prontera, 2017).

In the Commission's view, an integrated internal energy market was essential for strengthening the security of supply across Europe. Greater interconnection would enable energy to flow more efficiently and, therefore, increase energy solidarity between member states in the case of an energy crisis (Prontera, 2017). Additionally, the European Commission supported the view that the Internal Energy Market plans should be accompanied by external energy objectives. However, the member states and the energy industry strongly opposed the implementation of the measures that aimed to promote the liberalisation of the energy sector. This opposition delayed the finalisation of the Commission's original proposals by a decade (Prontera, 2017).

5.4.2 Post-cold War-era developments in European Energy Policy

Overall, the development of the common external energy policy proved to be harder than expected (Prontera, 2017). Neither the Maastricht Treaty (1992), nor the Amsterdam Treaty (1997), nor the Nice Treaty (2001) provided for an external energy strategy as envisaged by the Commission (Prontera, 2017; Maltby, 2013). In 1992 the European Commission attempted to include an Energy Chapter in the Maastricht Treaty, but without success as the proposal was vetoed by the resource-rich states (Dutton, 2015). The Treaty 'only gave the EU the competence to improve cross-border energy infrastructures through a programme known as the Trans-European-Networks (TENs)' (Prontera, 2017, 10). Thus, the Commission's competency

was limited to the internal energy market, while the Council could act unanimously on the Commission proposals (after consulting with the European Parliament (Maltby, 2013).

During the 1990s, besides the construction of the internal energy market, the European Commission placed significant effort in increasing European energy security by projecting its internal market rules beyond its borders through multilateral frameworks for energy cooperation, such as the Energy Charter Treaty (ECT). The ECT was signed in 1994 but entered into legal force in 1998. It aimed at integrating the energy sectors of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe into the European and world markets by promoting the adoption of market rules in producer and transit countries and encouraging investment in the energy sector (Prontera, 2017). Although currently, it has fifty-three signatories and contracting parties, Russia was one of its main targets. This is because the Energy Charter Treaty was considered as a much more effective instrument of promoting the EU's regulatory framework to Russia when compared to the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (1994) and later the EU-Russian Energy Dialogue 2000 (Prontera, 2017).

Nevertheless, although Moscow signed the ECT in 1994 and provisionally applied it, the Treaty was never submitted to the Duma for ratification. In 2009, Russia officially refused to ratify the Treaty. The change in policy is mainly attributed to the change in the country's leadership and the improvement of Russia's economy (Roe and Happold, 2011). This blow to the ECT regime was essentially a setback to the external dimension of European energy policy and its aim of promoting the EU's internal energy market rules beyond its borders.

In 1995, the European Commission published a White Paper on Energy Policy, containing several detailed guidelines that aimed to increase the competitiveness of the European energy market, enhance the security of supply, and protect the environment. The document suggested that the external dimension was 'considered in general to be the most important vehicle for action' (European Commission, 1995, 4). This was due to the

Community being highly dependent on imports of energy sources, but above all, because the demand for energy across the world was expected to grow, thus intensifying the competition over energy resources (European Commission, 1995). Although the lack of legal instruments made the external energy objectives difficult to achieve, the first internal energy market directives (First Energy Package) to open up national electricity and gas markets were launched in 1996 and 1998 (Malty, 2013).

The directives that formed part of the First Energy Package were expected to be transposed into Member States' legal systems by 1998 (electricity) and 2000 (gas). These also obliged the European Commission to produce reports on any additional measures that might be required to harmonise national regulations and remove the remaining barriers, to allow the flow of electricity and gas across borders in the EU (Penttinen, 2020). The reports revealed significant shortcomings in the implementation of directives and regulations. This indicated that while some members went beyond their obligations when it came to the application of EU law, others failed to implement EU directives, thus undermining the Commission's market liberalisation efforts (Penttinen, 2020).

Two years later, in 2000, the European Commission published the first Green Paper entitled *Towards a European Strategy for the Security of Energy Supply*. The document emphasised the need for diversification of supplies, highlighting that the 'Union suffers from having no competence and no community cohesion in energy matters', which was highly problematic, especially in the light of increasing dependence on energy imports (European Commission, 2000, 28). More concretely, it pointed out that apart

> from the powers established by the ECSC and EURATOM treaties, there is no explicit mandate for a European energy policy. As a result, over the last 40 years, Europe has failed to develop a consistent common energy policy (within both the EU and the International Energy Agency) (European Commission, 2000, 28).

According to the European Commission (2000), the problem was that the lack of a common energy policy reduced the Union's bargaining power vis-à-vis the oil-exporting countries.

Interestingly enough, however, and in contrast to other suppliers, the Commission did not see the dependency on Russia as worrying, noting that 'the continuity of supplies from the former Soviet Union, and then Russia, over the last 25 years is testimony to an exemplary stability' (Commission, 2000, 44). In that context, and because a third of world gas reserves were located in Russia, which meant that a 'certain increase in dependence' on Moscow seemed inevitable, the document stressed the need for establishing a long-term strategy 'in the framework of a partnership with Russia' (Commission, 2000, 48). Thus, in October 2000, during an informal EU Summit, the Council instructed the Commission to establish a regular energy dialogue with Moscow (Matlby, 2013).

On the internal front, the failure of the First Energy Package to deliver the desired outcomes led to the adoption of the Second Energy Package in 2003. Its directives were expected to be transposed into national law of the EU member states by 2004, while some provisions entered into force only in 2007. Industrial and domestic consumers were now free to choose their gas and electricity suppliers from a broader range of competitors.

The Second Energy Package followed the logic of the First Energy Package. Both focused on the development of market access; the Directive 2003/54/EC introduced the free choice of electricity suppliers, while the Directive 2003/55/EC introduced the free choice of gas suppliers. The adoption of the Second Energy Package initiated a wave of mergers of electricity and gas companies across the EU; European energy champions acquired many of the smaller European companies. Even though significant progress had been made in the liberalisation of the internal market, the competition was slow to take off, and energy markets remained largely national.

Overall, in the first decade of the twenty-first century, EU energy policy underwent significant changes. During this time, a large number of proposals, directives and regulations touching almost every aspect of energy policy were introduced and enacted (Dunffield and Birchfield, 2011; Prontera, 17). Paradoxically, however, the EU lacked legal instruments to tackle any serious energy crisis in the EU because, following the expiration of the ECSC Treaty in 2002, and until the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty in 2009, the Euratom Treaty remained the 'sole legal basis' for EU actions in the area of energy, and this was limited to the nuclear sector (Andoura, Hancher and Van der Woude, 2010, 18). The consequences of the lack of the Commission's competency in the external dimension became evident in 2006 when Russia cut off the supplies of gas to Ukraine due to a crisis in their relations, which in turn reduced the flow of gas to several European states.

5.4.3 The evolution of European Energy Policy 2004-2014

Until the 2004 EU enlargement, the European states saw their energy partnership with Moscow as a way to diversify their supplies and enhance their energy security. Although energy dependence on Russia became recognised as an issue of 'special concern for Europe' in 2003, as evident from the 2003 European Security Strategy, it was not listed as one of the key threats, and Old Europe did not see it as such.

The dependence of 'Old' European states on Russian resources did not exceed 40 per cent of their overall consumption. Hence, imports of Russian resources were viewed as contributions to their diversification strategy and, consequently, to their energy security (Geden, Marcelis and Maurer, 2006). Major European countries like Germany, France and Italy favoured bilateral relationships with Russia, as they could get more favourable terms for

their gas contracts (Natorski and Herranz-Surralles, 2008). In this context, these countries considered their relationship with Russia as too important to be left to European institutions.

Following the 2004 and 2007 EU enlargements, the diversity of approaches to enhancing energy security in Europe became much broader. In contrast to Old Europe, the new members (former members of the Eastern bloc) were, and still are, heavily dependent on Russian natural gas (Hashimoto, Rhimes, 2017). Due to their strained relations with Moscow, these states perceive the increased European dependence on Russian energy resources as a threat to their national security. Therefore, since joining the EU and being backed by the United States, they have pushed for the diversification of supplies away from Russia and the development of a common EU energy security policy towards Russia (US Senate, 2014).

The 2006 and 2009 Russia-Ukraine gas crises provided a window of opportunity for all those who advocated the creation of a common energy policy to frame the events in such a way as to shift the views of member states of the issue to one that required EU-level attention and action (Maltby, 2013).

A trade dispute in 2006 over the price of gas and transit fees for the resources transported to Europe via the pipeline system that crossed through Ukraine, channelling almost 80 per cent of Europe's gas imports, sparked the Russia-Ukraine gas crisis. The failure of the negotiations between Ukraine and Gazprom resulted in Russia turning off the gas taps to Ukraine on January 1, 2006. Due to the significance of this transit route, changes in the gas flow were already noticeable the next day. For example, gas supplies in Hungary had fallen by up to 40 per cent; France, Austria, Romania and Slovakia lost up to 30 per cent. Italy's gas inflow fell by 25 per cent, and Poland lost 14 per cent of its gas supplies (Aalto 2008a, 38, Stern 2006, 8). This, in turn, raised concerns in many Central and Eastern European (CEE) capitals about their reliance on Russian gas supplies.

The incident was highly politicised, although Russia had been seen as a reliable energy supplier since the Soviet era, and there was no clear evidence suggesting whether the cutting off of gas supplies was indeed a result of an economic dispute or 'energy blackmail'. More specifically, several CEE member states and the US interpreted the incident as Russian punishment for the European choice made by Ukrainians during the Orange Revolution (Bahgat, 2006, 962). This led to the prevalence of the idea that any future cuts in Russian gas supplies either to the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) or Europe would be interpreted as being politically motivated, no matter how strong the evidence pointing at political motivation was (Stern, 2006, 16).

The 2006 gas crisis also led to an increased role of the European institutions in formulating common European energy policy, particularly that of the Commission. Although the Commission's efforts to develop a common European Energy Policy began much earlier, in the 1980s, meaningful progress in both the internal and external dimensions of European Energy policy was made much later. This progress was achieved 'mainly due to the "windows of opportunity" brought about by external events' such as the 2006 gas crisis (Natorski and Surrales, 2008, 74).

The 2006 gas crisis helped the Commission convince member states that in the new energy landscape of the 21st century, 'an approach based solely on 25 individual energy policies is not enough' (European Commission, 2006, 4). So, the crisis allowed the Commission to make a case for the transfer of energy policy-making powers from the member states to the Commission and stress the need to develop a common European energy policy (ibid).

In the coming years, in response to the gas crises and the significant shortcomings identified in the implementation of the European gas and electricity markets by the Commission's Directorate-General for competition (COM(2005), 24 final), EU policymakers

introduced several initiatives aiming to create a common external energy policy and internal energy market.

In this context, in 2007, and just a few months after the announcement of the South Stream pipeline, the European Commission put forward a legislative proposal for a Third Energy Package (Directives 2009/72/EC and 2009/73/EC) which aimed at improving the functioning of the internal market, mainly through ownership unbundling. This required the separation of energy supply and generation from the operation of transmission networks (European Parliament and European Council, 2009). In addition, the legislative package also focused on enhancing the powers of the national energy regulators and the Commission's role in overseeing the internal energy market (Prontera, 2017).

One of the key elements of the Commission's legislative proposal was the 'third country reciprocity clause' or 'Gazprom clause'. According to Prontera (2017), this clause would prevent any non-EU companies from acquiring control over transmission assets in the EU in the absence of an agreement allowing foreign access to assets in their home countries. So, any asset swaps between European Companies and non-EU companies such as Gazprom would stop. According to Eikeland (2011), the Commission included the reciprocity clause in response to the fears that mandatory ownership unbundling would lead to the acquisition of EU energy grids by third countries, specifically Gazprom. Furthermore, with the introduction of the clause, the Commission also aimed to secure the support of the Eastern member states for its strategy to combine market forces with a united voice in energy talks with Moscow (ibid).

However, due to the resistance of Germany, France and Italy, the Commission's original proposal was reviewed. Nevertheless, non-EU companies that intended to acquire control over gas or electricity networks were now obliged to comply with the same unbundling requirements as the EU companies. If they did not, they would be refused the required certification for the distribution system operators (Van Elsuwege, 2014).

Overall, the Third Energy Package, which entered into force only in September of 2009, just a few months after the 2009 gas crisis, significantly strengthened the regulatory powers of the Commission in addition to devoting attention to infrastructure development.

By the time that the Third Energy Package entered into force, the Commission had also published the Second Strategic Review – "An EU Energy Security and Solidarity Action Plan", in 2008. In this document, the Commission outlined the measures that it saw necessary to ensure that the Union '"speaks with one voice" on external energy issues' (European Commission, 2008, 17). It also called for creating a common internal market and stressed the need to develop the Southern gas corridor, for 'the supply of gas from Caspian and Middle Eastern sources, which could potentially supply a significant part of the EU's future needs' (European Commission, 2008, 4).

Overall, between 2004 and 2009, the attempts of the European Commission to establish and spread the idea of a well-regulated internal energy market faced issues concerning the correct implementation of the relevant legislation. The problems of implementation suggest that the Commission's multilateral logic was not shared by all member states.

For example, some states, such as Spain, favoured the liberalisation of energy markets 'as this suits their domestic framework' (Pick, 2012, 331). The United Kingdom would also benefit from the expansion of its market operators to the rest of the Single Market. However, in general, the liberalisation of energy markets would primarily benefit member states with a high dependence on Russian gas (Youngs, 2009; Pick, 2012).

In contrast, other member states such as France, Germany and Italy viewed their national champions as valuable tools that enable negotiations with suppliers such as Gazprom to be conducted on 'equal terms'. These countries supported the liberalisation of markets but resisted the transfer of energy policy-making powers to the EU institutions as they held the view that bilateral agreements best served their national and energy security interests.

The contradiction of supporting the Commission's proposals for the liberalisation of markets while refusing to give up any national control over their energy markets and continuing to pursue external energy policies non-aligned with the Commission proposals highlights the complexity of converging towards a common energy policy in the EU.

However, the European Commission was convinced that the issues of energy security and market integration were interconnected. More specifically, it held the view that EU member states would converge towards a common external energy policy only if the European market was fully integrated (Prontera, 2017). In any case, energy policy-making remained a national competence before the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty on December 1, 2009.

The Lisbon Treaty turned energy policy into a shared competence between the EU and its member states (Proedrou, 2012). The energy chapter included in the Treaty, in 'the context of the establishment and functioning of the internal market' and 'in a spirit of solidarity' clearly outlines the objectives of the Union's energy policy (Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, Art. 194). These are to 'ensure the functioning of the energy market', to 'ensure security of energy supply in the Union', to 'promote energy efficiency and energy saving and the development of new and renewable forms of energy' and to 'promote the interconnection of energy networks' (Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, Art. 194).

The energy chapter also required the European Parliament and the Council to establish the measures necessary to achieve the above objectives. However, the same Article suggests that these 'measures shall not affect a Member State's right to determine the conditions for exploiting its energy resources, its choice between different energy sources and the general structure of its energy supply' (Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, Art. 194). So, while the Lisbon Treaty enhanced the role of the EU in energy policy-making, and in theory, promoted a common energy policy in the EU, as Prontera (2017, 13) correctly notes, it 'did not reduce the autonomy that member states traditionally enjoyed'. In other words, it did

not make the EU an actor in energy policy, at least not in the external dimension of energy policy.

In 2009, following the second gas crisis, and after deeming the Directive 2004/67/EC as no longer sufficient to deal with supply disruptions, the European Commission adopted a regulation on the Security of Gas Supply (Kopp, 2015). The Gas Security of Supply Regulation 994/2010, which entered into force in December 2010, aimed to provide coordinated gas supply crisis prevention and response mechanisms (Kopp, 2015). Maltby (2013) notes that this significantly increased the role of the Commission as a coordinator and granted it some decision-making powers.

However, in September 2011, the European Commission admitted that the EU could not fulfil the energy policy objectives set out in the Lisbon Treaty and promote the 2020 strategy without addressing the external dimension (Commission, 2011, 2). Acknowledging the impact that the 'bilateral agreements of member states with third countries' have on 'the development of energy infrastructure and energy supply to the EU', and in order to ensure compliance with EU legislation, the Commission proposed the creation of an information exchange mechanism on intergovernmental agreements in the field of energy (Commission, 2011). The decision on establishing an information exchange mechanism (No 994/2012/EU) was adopted on October 25, 2012 (European Parliament and Council of the European Union, 2012) and entered into force on November 17, 2012. Later, however, it was determined that carrying out compliance checks following the conclusion of agreements was ineffective.

In 2013, a new regulation (Regulation 347/2013) on trans-European energy infrastructure entered into force. It aimed to promote the expansion of Europe's energy infrastructures and improve cross-border interconnection, so no EU member state would 'remain isolated from the European gas and electricity networks after 2015 or see its energy security jeopardised by lack of the appropriate connections' (European Parliament and Council

of the European Union, 2013). The idea behind the Regulation was that union-wide integrated networks could guarantee the security of supply, in particular for gas and oil, and have significant other benefits for the Member states.

Later the same year, the European Commission set out a list of 248 key energy infrastructure projects of common interest (PCIs). These projects would benefit from faster permit granting procedures and improved regulatory treatment. (European Commission, 2013).

Even though a number of measures were adopted following the 2006 and 2009 gas crises to reduce member states' reliance on Russian gas supplies and strengthen European energy security (gas supplies), Europe was still far from speaking with one voice on energy matters at this point of time. Major European powers such as Germany, France, Italy, and Austria still saw strengthening bilateral agreements with Russia as a better way to enhance their energy security. This led to a clash of interests in the EU. However, the landscape of European energy security changed significantly following the annexation by Russia of Crimea in March 2014.

5.4.4 The evolution of energy policy between 2014 and 2019

Following the annexation of Crimea on March 21, the European Council tasked the European Commission to conduct an in-depth study of European energy security and formulate a plan that would enable the reduction of EU energy reliance on Russia by June of the same year (Prontera, 2017). Following the European Council Summit on the new 2030 Framework on Climate and Energy, the Polish Prime Minister, Donald Tusk, proposed the establishment of an Energy Union (ibid).

Tusk's proposal for the creation of an Energy Union was a response to recent political developments in Ukraine and Russia's increased pressure on its neighbour concerning its unpaid gas bills (Financial Times, 2014). He held the view that 'Europe should confront Russia's monopolistic position with a single European body charged with buying its gas' (Tusk, 2014). So, Tusk's Energy Union proposal was based on six pillars. These were:

i. Common purchase of gas – which aimed to strengthen the EU's bargaining power
ii. Strengthening the solidarity mechanism – in the case of a cut in supplies to one EU member state
iii. Support and development of common energy infrastructures
iv. The development and use of domestic energy resources
v. Diversification of supplies
vi. Strengthening of the European energy community

According to Tusk, the creation of an Energy Union could end Russia's energy stronghold (Tusk, 2014a).

The idea of an Energy Union was not new to EU member states, nor was it the first time that there had been efforts from Polish officials to promote a common European approach to gas imports from Russia. The proposal echoed previous energy policy initiatives such as the idea of a European Energy Community (2010) by Jack Delors, ex-president of the European Commission and the 'Musketeer Pact' proposed in 2006 by Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz, the Polish PM. Nevertheless, EU member states have long avoided the development of a common European energy security policy. The annexation of Crimea and the appointment of Donald Tusk to the presidency of the European Council, however, created a new window of opportunity for the establishment of a common EU energy policy.

On March 21, 2014, the Commission released the European Energy Security Strategy, expressing its support for the creation of an Energy Union (European Commission, 2014d). In the document, the Commission recognised that 'despite all the achievements in strengthening its infrastructure and diversifying its suppliers' following the 2006 and 2009 gas

crises, the ‘EU remains vulnerable to external energy shocks’ (European Commission, 2014d, 2). In this context, it suggested that the EU needs a ‘hard-headed strategy for energy security which promotes resilience to these shocks and disruptions to energy supplies in the short term and reduced dependency on particular fuels, energy suppliers and routes in the long-term’ (European Commission, 2014d, 2). The Commission’s proposal was endorsed at the next summit of the European Council in June 2014.

Early in 2015, under Jean-Claude Junker, the European Commission took a step further by embracing Tusk’s Energy Union proposal, yet with a much broader policy focus (Vandendriessche, 2017; Prontera, 2017). While Tusk’s proposal focused mainly on the security of supply, the Commission’s version of Energy Union as set out in its Communication (‘A Framework Strategy for a Resilient Energy Union with a Forward-Looking Climate Change Policy’) was based on five interrelated dimensions: energy security, a fully integrated European energy market, energy efficiency, climate policy, and research (European Commission, 2015a).

Since the launch of the Energy Union, the Commission has published several packages of measures and reports on the state of the Energy Union. According to the Commission’s most recent report on the state of the Energy Union, the EU has strengthened its energy security with new rules on the security of gas supply that allow cross-border regional cooperation and to prevent and manage the risk of gas disruptions. Progress has also been made in the gas market as a result of the revision of the Gas Directive (European Commission, 2019). The next section will look into the measures that led to this progress in more detail.

5.4.5 Intergovernmental Agreements

In March 2015, in its Conclusions, the European Council called for ‘full compliance with EU law of all agreements related to the buying of gas from external suppliers, notably by reinforcing transparency of such agreements and compatibility with EU energy security provisions’ (European Council, 2015, 2). While an information exchange mechanism regarding intergovernmental agreements between EU member states and third countries was established in 2012 by Decision No 994/2012/EU, it was later determined that carrying out compliance checks following the conclusion of such agreements was ineffective.

More specifically, the Commission had concluded that while the mechanism was ‘useful for receiving information on existing IGAs and for identifying problems posed by them in terms of their compatibility with EU law, it is, however, not sufficient to solve such problems’ (European Commission, 2015b). Thus, in the context of the Energy Union’s strategy, and because energy security has been at the heart of the political debate, in February 2016, the European Commission proposed a review of the 2012 IGA Decision (European Commission, 2016b). The proposal aimed to ensure the Commission’s involvement in the negotiation of such agreements before a member state and a third country had reached an agreement.

An agreement on the modification of the Decision on Intergovernmental agreements was reached on April 5, 2017. In the revised IGA Decision (EU) 2017/684, the European Commission’s oversight function was significantly strengthened. According to the Decision, member states should notify the European Commission of their intention to enter into negotiations with regard to new intergovernmental agreements or amendments to existing agreements as soon as possible (IGA Decision (EU) 2017/684). During the period of the negotiation of an agreement, the European Commission should be allowed to advise the

member state involved on how to avoid incompatibility with EU law. This, in turn, would allow for the preparation of agreements that comply with Union law. In any case, according to the Decision, the member state should inform the Commission on an ex-ante basis of any draft oil and gas agreements before these become legally binding.

This amendment allows the European Commission to authorise and block both existing and future intergovernmental agreements negotiated by EU member states and third countries (Bochkarev, 2018), meaning that member states will no longer have the ability to build pipelines without the Commission's approval. However, as Chapter Eight will demonstrate, Nord Stream II was built despite Commission's opposition.

5.4.6 The Security of Gas Supply Regulation

Since the annexation of Crimea, the EU has stress-tested European states and neighbouring countries to measure their ability to survive without Russian gas and develop lessons on minimising the impact of potential disruption (European Commission, 2014g). Based on the results, the Commission has proposed the revision of the Security of Gas Supply Regulation.

On April 26, 2017, the European Parliament and the Council negotiators reached an agreement on new security of gas supply regulation to prevent future gas supply crises. The revised Security of Supply Regulation No. (EU) 2017/1938 entered into force on November 1, 2017, and repealed the first Security of Gas Supply Regulation No 994/2010 adopted in 2010 (European Commission, 2017c).

The new Regulation introduced a new solidarity 'measure' that requires EU member states to help out their neighbours in a gas supply crisis. The Regulation also aims to 'ensure a regionally coordinated and common approach when choosing the security of supply measures among the EU Member States' (European Commission, 2017a). This is expected to lead to

better management of gas supply crises. Most importantly, however, these rules are expected to ensure greater transparency concerning long-term natural gas contracts; natural gas supply companies will be obliged to notify the Commission about contracts relevant to the security of supply (European Commission, 2017a).

5.4.7 Gas Directive 2019

In June 2017, following the realisation that EU law and specifically the Gas Directive 2009/73/EC does not apply to external pipelines such as Nord Stream II, the European Commission sought a mandate from member states to negotiate an agreement with Russia.

According to the document - leaked to the media - the mandate aimed to fill the 'legal void' for offshore sections of the pipeline or avoid a 'conflict of laws' by negotiating 'a specific regime which will apply key principles of EU energy law to Nord Stream 2 to preserve the functioning of the European internal energy market' (European Commission, 2017b).

However, in its Opinion (12590/17) on the requested mandate, the Council Legal Services rejected the Commission's claim that a 'legal void' existed. According to the document, the offshore sections of the pipeline - where neither EU law, member state law or Russian law apply - are subject to international law (Council of the European Union Legal Service, 2017, 5). In addition, it stressed that the third state (here Russia), member states involved and the Union 'would, in any case, have jurisdiction to regulate the operation of the pipeline at the respective points of departure and arrival of the pipeline on their territory' (Council of the European Union Legal Service, 2017, 5).

The Legal Service also concluded that there could be no 'conflict of laws' if both Russia and the Union applied their jurisdictions to Nord Stream II, as this would presuppose that the Gas Directive is applicable to the part of the Nord Stream II pipeline, which is under the

jurisdiction of the Union and Germany (Council of the European Union Legal Service, 2017, 6). However, according to the Opinion, this is not the case.

The legal service advised that the Gas Directive does not apply to Nord Stream II for several reasons. This is because 'none of the Directive's main regulatory instruments...addresses the particularly complex situation of an offshore import pipeline with a third country' which could be explained by the fact that there was no intention to apply the Directive to offshore import pipelines with third Countries (Council of the European Union Legal Service, 2017, 10).

Following the release of the legal advice of the Council of the European Union Legal Service, on November 8, 2017, the European Commission presented a proposal for a Directive amending the Gas Directive 2009/73/EC. The proposed amendments aimed to ensure that the rules applicable to gas transmission lines within the Union (internal pipelines) were also applicable to gas transmission lines to and from third countries (European Commission, 2017d). This included provisions on third-party access, tariff regulation, ownership unbundling and transparency (European Commission, 2017d).

There is little doubt that the Commission's proposal was an instrument aimed at Nord Stream II, as it was not 'envisaged either in the February 2015 EC energy union strategy or in the state of energy union reports' (Yafimava, 2019,1). The Director of DG Energy for the Internal Market, Klaus-Dieter Borchardt, confirmed that the main aim of the proposal was to ensure that the revised Gas Directive was applicable to Nord Stream II (ibid).

Not surprisingly, the European Commission, the European Parliament, but also eleven EU member states, called for accelerating work on the revision of the Gas Directive. However, Germany, Austria, Belgium and the Netherlands opposed these attempts (Bodalska, 2018).

The Commission's proposal required adoption by a qualifying majority in the Council which seemed difficult to achieve during the Bulgarian and Austrian presidencies of the

Council (Yafimava 2019). Considering that the adoption of the amendments would upset the regulatory framework of the Nord Stream II, the EU Council's rejection of the Commission's proposal would be the best possible outcome for the pipeline (Yafimava, 2019).

However, the political climate changed under the Romanian presidency when in February 2019, the French Foreign Minister stated that France intended to support the Commission's proposal (Gurzu, 2019). France's support of amendments would deprive the supporters of Nord Stream II, Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, and Belgium of a blocking minority, thus making it impossible to block the revised Directive (Yafimava, 2019).

However, on February 8, 2019, France and Germany agreed on new rules governing import pipelines from third countries. After more than a year of negotiations, on February 12, 2019, representatives of the Commission, the EU Parliament and the Member States reached a provisional agreement on the amendments to the EU Gas Directive. The deal on the updated gas directive shifts the responsibility of regulating gas import pipelines from third countries to the country in which the first entry point of the pipeline is located and allows member states to obtain derogation for existing pipelines. The Council's adoption of the amendment to the Gas Directive on April 15, 2019, was the last step in the legislative process. The amended Directive entered into force on May 23, 2019, and member states were given nine months to transpose the Directive into national legislation.

According to the European Commissions' fourth report on the state of the Energy Union, progress was made in the gas market with the revision of the Gas Directive. Gas pipelines entering or leaving the European internal gas market now need to comply with EU gas market rules. The report also points out that the Commission's efforts to ensure diversification of gas supply are also delivering concrete results.

Overall, evidence points to the fact that despite the earlier efforts, only following the annexation of Crimea, the EU member states agreed to transfer some energy policymaking

powers to the Commission, allowing it to play a more significant role in European energy policymaking the coming years. However, since the member states were the main drivers of energy policy until the late 2010s, the focus on European Commission's images as an intervening variable was not particularly helpful for explaining the impact of the Great Power competition on the development of common energy security policy in the EU.

Conclusion

Overall, in the first part of this chapter, the evidence shows that during the Cold War era and to a lesser extent in the early post-Cold War era, the US made significant efforts to check the sources of Moscow's increasing power. Moscow's energy partnership with European states was interpreted in Washington as a threat to US national security interests for several reasons. According to declassified US intelligence, energy trade between the Soviet Union and Europe increased Moscow's political influence in Europe, making Europeans more vulnerable to Soviet coercion. Washington was afraid that successful Soviet-European pipeline deals could reduce the Europeans' willingness to support US economic sanctions against the Soviet Union. The documents suggest that Moscow could also use US-European disagreements over the expansion of Soviet pipelines to create and exploit divisions between Western Europe and the United States.

Other concerns repeatedly expressed in the intelligence assessments were related to the threats emanating from Moscow's increased hard currency income from the energy trade with Europe. Income was then invested in the Soviet economy and military sector, facilitating military build-up and increasing the military threat to collective security.

Evidence demonstrates that despite extensive US efforts to persuade their European allies from completing energy agreements with Moscow, Western European states viewed

energy partnership with the Soviet Union as an opportunity to enhance their energy security. Besides the delivery of cheap and reliable oil and gas supplies, energy partnerships with Moscow had also created multi-million business opportunities for major European companies, which Europeans did not want to give up.

While US official documents show that the results of the US pressure on European states were mixed, successful on some occasions, not successful on others, these efforts continued intensively until the collapse of the Soviet Union.

The second part of this chapter found that all the progress made toward the creation of a common energy (gas) policy in the EU, even the Energy Union itself, was in response to a Russia-related crisis. However, this could be because the focus on EU institutions did not allow for other dynamics to be taken into account that may have been uncovered if the focus had been on EU member states rather than EU institutions. By focusing on the EU institutions, and more specifically on the work of the Commission, this chapter revealed little about the impact of Great Power competition on the development of a common European energy security policy. This is mainly because member states were both the main recipients of the systemic pressure and the main drivers of European energy policy until the establishment of the Energy Union.

The application of the Two-Level Neoclassical Model to the case study

The application of the Two-Level Neoclassical Realist Model to the first case study has advanced our knowledge of the phenomenon under investigation, but it was not without problems. This approach has enabled a detailed examination of the Great Power Level but sheds little light on the Intra-European Level. More specifically, it allowed a better understanding of how Washington's interpretation of Soviet energy exports as a source of Soviet power triggered competition with Russia over the European energy sector in the Cold

War era. It also helped to explain why the US interpretation of Russian energy exports to Europe changed in the early post-Cold War era.

The Two-Level model did not work well at Level 2 of the analysis in this case study. This can be attributed to the fact that the focus here was on the EU institutions, and more specifically, on the EU Commission. Since the main 'recipients' of the systemic pressure and the main drivers of energy policy in the EU are the member states, the focus on EU institutions revealed little about the phenomenon under investigation.

However, the Two-Level model will prove to have advanced our understanding of the impact of the Great Power competition on European energy policy in the next case study, which will find that US-Russian security competition has affected the development of a common European energy security policy.

Chapter Six – The Case of the South Stream and Nord Stream I Pipelines (Level 1)

The previous chapter examined the impact of US-Russian security competition on European energy politics between the 1990 and early 2000s and discussed how the common energy security policy evolved between the mid-2000s and 2019. This case study, divided into two chapters, will look into the key issues surrounding the impact of US-Russian security competition on the development of the South Stream and Nord Stream projects and, consequently, on the development of the common European energy policy between 2004 and 2014. It will find that as the competition between the US and Russia intensified, Washington and Moscow took measures that have both delayed and accelerated the development of a common European energy security policy. Furthermore, it will also demonstrate that developments in the European energy (gas) sector are a response to external pressure and incentives in addition to being internally generated.

This chapter will be structured as follows. The first section will discuss Russia's energy strategy with a focus on the gas sector. It will look into the project details of the South Stream and Nord Stream I pipelines and explore the Kremlin's commercial and political motives behind the development of the two projects. The second section will then examine the US perspective on the expansion of Russian gas infrastructure to Europe. It will also look into Washington's efforts to block the construction of the two pipelines. The aim of this chapter is to explain the clash of US and Russian interests over the construction of the two pipelines. The next chapter then will examine developments at the intra-European Level.

6.1 South Stream and Nord Stream I

The cases of the South Stream and Nord Stream I pipelines were selected for this study because in recent years these two pipeline projects have been at the centre of European energy discussions. South Stream is an abandoned Russian pipeline project that aimed to transfer natural gas from Russia to Europe. The project was characterised as controversial, with some authors arguing that the pipeline was designed to serve Moscow's strategic interests by increasing the EU's dependence on Russian natural gas (Baran, 2008; Cohen, 2009c).

In the literature, there are two opposing scenarios about the reasons for the cancellation of the project. One strand of the literature suggests that the pipeline was suspended due to its legal incompatibility with the EU's Third Energy Package (Munteanu and Sarno, 2016; Andersen, Goldthau, and Sitter, 2017; Askerov, 2018). Another strand adopts the view that the real reason for the suspension of the project was Russia's recognition that the pipeline was too expensive to complete under the current economic circumstances (Hobbs, 2017; Kodousková and Jirušek, 2014). However, one scenario that has not been investigated in depth is that the pipeline was cancelled because the US saw it as a threat to its interests in Europe and exerted significant pressure on South Stream's European partners to abandon the project.

Nord Stream I, on the other hand, was successfully inaugurated in 2011. The plans for the construction of the pipeline have been in the air since 1997. When Finland and Sweden finally agreed to the pipeline running through their territorial waters, the development of the pipeline raised tension within the EU (Vernon, 2010) and attracted criticism from the other side of the Atlantic.

Larsson (2007) argued that if the pipeline was constructed, it would contribute to the diversification of supply routes to Europe. However, it could become a 'source of friction as it may rock the regional stability and reduce the potential of the new EU member states to become

security providers in Europe's northern dimension' (Larsson, 2007, i). Similarly, in a Report commissioned by the Committee of Foreign Affairs of the European Parliament (2008), the author expressed the view that even though the pipeline would enhance the energy security of Germany, it would affect the EU in a negative way (Larsson, 2008). The project, according to Larsson, hampered 'the development of a common energy strategy as it divided the EU and the region into two parts', those that would benefit from its construction and those that would not (Larsson, 2008, iii). He also noted that although the development of the pipeline was driven largely by commercial interests, considering Russia's ambition to restore its great power status, it might use energy in its political endeavours (Larsson, 2008, iii).

The expansion of Russian energy infrastructure to Europe has always been seen in Washington as a threat to US interests. The US feared that the energy partnership between Moscow and European states could encourage greater dependence on Russia, which in turn could increase Moscow's influence over Europe to the detriment of US interests. Interestingly, despite the existence of substantial evidence dating back to the Cold War era, there have been no systematic studies linking Great Power Politics and European energy politics. Political scientists tend to examine the cases of South Stream and Nord Stream I in the context of EU-Russian relations, and little attention is given to the US interests or efforts to block the construction of Russian pipeline projects. Even when some studies acknowledge Washington's involvement in European energy politics (Lohmann and Westphal, 2019; Boyd-Berrett, 2017; Prontera, 2017; Mangott, 2010; Engdahl, 2010; Smith, 2010), they fail to investigate the role that US-Russian security competition has played in the formulation of European energy security policy. This chapter aims to fill this gap.

The next section will examine the Russian energy strategy between 2004 and 2014 and investigate how the US interprets and reacts to Russian gas exports. In order to explain how the US and Russia translate systemic incentives and threats into specific policy decisions, our

analysis will focus on two intervening variables that condition how states respond to systemic pressure: the leaders' images and the strategic culture.

6. 2 Level 1: Great Power Level

The Russian Energy Sector

According to Kroutikhin, the policy trend in Russia during Putin's presidency 'was a steady strengthening of the role of the state in the management of vital industries' (2008, 25). With control extended over the country's oil and gas industry by 2008, 'energy exports accounted for 67% of export revenues within the Russian budget' (ibid). In 2013 and 2014, energy trade made 50 per cent of the Russian budget, while the share of energy production in exports reached 88 per cent in 2014 (Gusev and Westphal, 2015). Revenues from export duties and taxation also contributed to the Russian Reserve Fund and Russian National Wealth Fund, amounting to $72.93 billion and $74.56 billion, respectively (data as of August 2015) (ibid).

However, for Russia, energy resources are not merely an income in hard currency; oil and gas have proved to be an essential tool for the Kremlin for increasing its influence in the post-Soviet space. For this reason, Russia's energy policy is often described as being dictated by geopolitical motives, for which it has been subject to much criticism from Central and Eastern Europe and the United States.

Since this chapter focuses on the case of the South Stream and Nord Stream I pipelines, the negotiations for the construction of which took place between the 2007 and 2014, this section will examine the most critical documents setting the framework and determining the objectives and goals of the Russian energy sector for this period. These are the Energy Strategy for the period up to 2020 (ES-2020) and Energy Strategy of Russia till 2030 (ES-2030). Since ES-2020 has already been discussed in Chapter Six, the focus here will be mainly on ES-2030.

6.2.1 Russian Energy Strategy (gas sector)

As discussed in the previous chapter, the ES-2020 approved by the Russian government in 2003, demonstrates that the Russian political leadership viewed the country's energy sector as a significant source of its economic and political power. This strategic document makes it clear that the country's energy sector constitutes a tool for conducting not only internal but also external politics. In this context, the ES-2020 places significant importance on the development of transport infrastructure, which in turn would allow Russia to increase the export of its energy resources abroad.

In 2010, the ES-2020 was replaced by the Energy Strategy of Russia till 2030 (ES-2030). The ES-2030 set new goals and priorities for the development of Russia's energy sector and extended the timeframe up to 2030. The objective of the new Russian Energy Strategy was to 'maximise the effective use of natural resources and the potential of the energy sector to sustain economic growth...and promote the strengthening of the foreign economic positions of the country' (Ministry of Energy of the Russian Federation, 2010, 10). Although according to the editor's note, the ES-2030 did not come in response to external conditions, there is little chance that the Russia-Ukraine gas crises did not play a role in the decision to refine the ES-2020.

This is clearly evident in the section on the gas industry, which points at the efforts of the Russian government to eliminate transit risks related to gas exports to Europe. Here it is important to note that, following the Russia-Ukraine gas disputes, transit risk was identified as one of the main problems in the gas sector. The document also provides an account of the progress made in the gas sector under ES-2020. More specifically, it refers to new gas pipeline systems under construction as part of Russia's export routes diversification policy and their stage of development.

When it comes to South Stream, it points out that the decision to begin the construction of the pipeline was given the go-ahead. However, ES-2030 makes it clear that while the construction of South Stream is of 'great importance' in the 'sphere of the development of new export routes', 'the priority role is assigned to the implementation of the "Severniy Potok" (Nord Stream) project' (Ministry of Energy of the Russian Federation, 2010, 79).

Interestingly, the analysis of ES-2030 also reveals that at the time of the construction of the two pipelines, Russian energy policymakers were aware of the decrease in demand for gas and cut in price for energy resources – which they largely attributed to the world economic crisis (Ministry of Energy of the Russian Federation, 2010, 57).

Policymakers in Russia were also becoming increasingly aware of the 'politicisation of energy relationships between Russia and foreign countries' (Ministry of Energy of the Russian Federation, 2010, 57). Despite that, however, export route diversification projects such as South Stream and Nord Stream were still placed at the heart of Russia's energy strategy.

6.3 The South Stream Project

South Stream was launched as part of the Kremlin's route diversification policy, a response to the 2006 and 2009 gas disputes with Ukraine (Prontera, 2018). The pipeline aimed to transfer natural gas from the Russian coast - the Beregovaya compression station, across the Black Sea to the Bulgarian coast (Gazprom 2007). It would then connect Bulgaria to Serbia, Hungary and Slovenia and move on to northern Italy via Greece, bypassing Belarus, Ukraine and Poland (Woehrel, 2009). The pipeline was designed to overcome the Ukraine route insecurity.

Figure 6 South Stream pipeline project

Source: 'Barroso warns Bulgaria on South Stream', Euractiv, May 28, 2014.

The Memorandum of Understanding for the construction of the South Stream pipeline project was signed on June 23, 2007, in Rome, by the Chairman of the Gazprom Management Committee, Alexander Medvedev and the Chief Executive Officer of Eni, Paolo Scaroni, in the presence of the Russian Industry and Energy Minister, Viktor Khristenko, and the Italian Minister for Economic Development, Pier Luigi Bersani (Gazprom, 2007a). During the signing ceremony, Bersani stated that the South Stream project 'aimed at strengthening European energy security' and that the Agreement was 'confirmation of the strategic partnership between Italy and the Russian Federation' (Gazprom, 2007a). Medvedev also supported the view that the Agreement was 'a significant contribution to the provision of energy security in Europe' (Gazprom, 2007a).

A few months later, on November 22, 2007, in Moscow, in the presence of Vladimir Putin and Romano Prodi, Gazprom and ENI signed a further agreement, establishing a joint venture for the development of the technical and economic foundations of South Stream.

During the press conference that followed the talks, President Putin stated that the 'Southern Stream project has strategic significance for ensuring Europe's energy security, on the basis of transparency and consideration of the mutual interests of energy suppliers and consumers' (President of Russia, 2007a).

In January 2008, a joint venture South Stream AG was registered in Switzerland while by spring 2008, Bulgaria, Greece, Serbia and Hungary had also signed the Agreement on the construction of South Stream (Youngs, 2009, 89). According to the shareholder's Agreement, signed in 2011, Gazprom retained 50 per cent of the shares, Eni, 20 per cent, while EDF and Wintershall held 15 per cent each (Hafner and Tagliapetra, 2015).

The pipeline was planned to carry 63 bcm of natural gas to Europe via four parallel lines each with a capacity of 15.75 bcm, and it consisted of a 925 km subsea section and 1,455 km onshore section in Europe.

The cost for the construction of the subsea section was estimated by Gazprom to be €10 billion while the onshore section was estimated to cost €6 billion (Rodova, 2012; Natural Gas World, 2012). However, Umbach (2014) claims that the real cost of the pipeline was €65 billion, including the cost of pipelines, gas compressors and other elements of the gas infrastructure. The high cost of construction made many Western officials and scholars question the economic rationale of the pipeline, especially when Gazprom decided to proceed with the implementation of the project even though the 2008-09 global financial crisis had led to a decrease in the demand for Russian gas in Europe.

6.3.1 Economic and Commercial Rationale

Western scholars and energy experts (Baran, 2008; Cohen 2009c), tend to argue that the South Steam pipeline was a purely political project with no economic rationale. This view, however,

seems to be based solely on the presumption that Russia is willing to use energy as a political weapon in order to regain influence in the post-Soviet space and promote its interests abroad. In order to assess whether this pipeline investment was justified from a commercial point of view, one first of all has to examine what purpose the pipeline was designed to serve. Was the pipeline required because the Russian export capacity at the time could not meet the European demand? Was it planned to meet future demand? Or was South Stream part of Russia's export route diversification policy?

According to available data on natural gas exports to Europe (See Table 8), between 1973 and 1990 there was a rapid increase in the export of Russian gas to Europe. Over the next decade, between 1990 and 2000, the increase in exports was rather stable, approximately 15 bcm every five years. Then, from 2000 to 2005, there was a significant increase in the volume exported, rising from 130.3 bcm to 154.3 bcm. However, as a result of the 2008-09 world economic crisis, in 2010, exports dropped to 138.6 bcm (Pirani and Yafimava, 2006).

Year	**1973**	**1975**	**1980**	**1985**	**1990**	**1995**	**2000**	**2005**	**2010**	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**
Volume in bcm	6.8	19.3	54.8	69.4	110.0	117.4	130.3	154.3	138.6	158.6	178,3	192.2

Table 8 Natural gas exports made to countries outside the former Soviet Union by Gazprom Export (in billion cubic meters)

Source: Created by the author according to information provided Gazprom Export

* Note: The figure includes Turkey which is not part of the EU.

The total Russian export capacity to Europe at the time that South Stream was announced exceeded the European demand. More specifically, the Russian pipeline capacity in 2007 was around 190 billion cubic meters per annum (combined capacity of Urengoy – Uzhgorod, Yamal-Europe and Blue Stream - see Table 9) and Russian gas exports to Europe was about 150 bcma in the same year. With Russian gas exports to Europe, since the turn of the century,

ranging between 150 bcma and 190 bcma it comes as no surprise that many suggested that the motive behind the construction of the pipeline was not commercial. This view was further strengthened by the fact that South Stream was given the green light, even though, by 2010, Moscow was aware of the decrease in demand for Russian natural gas in Europe.

Although these facts might, at first glance, strengthen the impression that South Stream was indeed a political project, several indicators suggest the opposite.

Pipeline	**Capacity**
Urengoy – Uzhgorod via Ukraine	142 bcma *Pirani and Yafimava (2016) estimate of 120 bcma assumes some deterioration due to lack of investment
Yamal – Europe via Belarus	33 bcma
Blue Stream via Turkey	15 bcma

Table 9 Key Russian gas export routes to Europe and capacities in 2007
Source: Created by the author according to information available on Tass.com.

First, despite the decrease in the demand for Russian gas in Europe due to the economic crisis, energy reports such as the Natural Gas Market Review 2007 (IEA, 2007), predicted that gas demand in Europe would rise over the period 2004-2015. Similarly, a report published in 2009 predicted that demand would gradually recover by 2010 (IEA, 2009). So, it is highly possible that Moscow expected that by 2015, when the first line of the pipeline was expected to be delivered, there would be sufficient demand to justify the investment. Consequently, the

possibility that South Stream was planned to meet the increase in future demand cannot be excluded.

Additionally, South Stream was not a solely Russian project. Major European companies were involved in the realisation of the project. While one could argue that Gazprom was serving political rather than economic interests, the same cannot be suggested for European energy champions like Eni (Italy), Électricité de France (France), and Wintershall (Germany). It is hard to imagine that these energy giants would invest in a project that made no sense from a financial point of view. Therefore, the participation of these major energy actors in the construction of the pipeline suggests that the South Stream investment was justifiable from a commercial point of view.

Furthermore, the plans for the construction of South Stream emerged following the 2006 energy crisis, as part of Russia's export routes diversification policy. The policy of diversifying gas export routes gained further support following the 2009 transit crisis between Russia and Ukraine, which resulted in gas supplies to EU being cut off for twenty days, costing Gazprom more than $2 billion. South Stream could serve as an alternative to the pipeline running via Ukraine, securing the uninterrupted flow of Russian gas to Europe, and in turn, the uninterrupted flow of hard currency from gas exports back in the country. In this context, it can be argued that the pipeline made sense both from the commercial and financial points of view.

By the time that the memorandum for the construction of the South Stream pipeline was signed (2007), gas volumes transited via Ukraine were already falling (see Table 10). While by 2014, the volumes transferred via Ukraine to Europe had fallen from 125-140 bcma to 58.9 bcma. Since Urengoy-Uzhgorod pipeline was running under capacity, one can only conclude that South Stream was not designed to deliver additional volumes of Russian gas to Europe but serve as an alternative to the Urengoy-Uzhgorod pipeline.

Year	2005	2007-2008	2009-2011	2012-2013	2014
Volume	125-140	115-120	100	85	58.9

Table 10 Volume transferred to Europe via Ukraine in bcm.

Source: Created by the author according to information provided by Tass.com.

However, according to Gazprom (2011), up to 2/3 of the pipeline capacity would serve existing EU gas demand, while 1/3 would be available to deliver additional volumes.

For all the discussed reasons, suggesting that South Stream makes no sense commercially or financially and is a purely political project, is inaccurate. Nevertheless, it would be naïve to assume that since the South Stream investment was justifiable from a commercial or a financial point of view, there were no political motives behind the construction of the pipeline or that the pipeline, if built, could not serve political interests.

6.3.2 Political Motives

The previous section has established that the South Stream investment was justifiable from a financial and commercial point of view. However, with as every other oil or gas pipeline, if built, it could also be used as a tool for the realisation of Russian foreign policy goals. After all, as is evident in the country's strategic documents, the Kremlin has never hidden its intentions to use energy to protect and advance its interests abroad.

For example, the Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (2008) clearly states that Russia makes use of 'all available economic leverage, resources and competitive advantages to protect its national interests' (FPC, 2008, Article 1). This is precisely what happened in the case of NATO's proposed enlargement to include Ukraine and Georgia.

Moscow skilfully used its energy card to prevent Kyiv from securing a NATO Membership Action Plan (MAP) status (Lyutskanov et al., 2013). More specifically, Russia drew on its bilateral energy relations with major EU states like Germany, France and Italy to derail any consensus on granting Ukraine and Georgia MAP status (Baran, 2009; Lyutskanov et al., 2013).

The importance of building bilateral relations with individual European countries is emphasised in the FPC 2008. The document suggests that the 'development of mutually advantageous bilateral relationships with Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Finland, Greece, the Netherlands, Norway and some other West-European States' has been considered 'an important resource for promoting Russia's national interests in the European and world affairs' (FPC, 2008, IV). And without a doubt, energy exports have well-served this purpose. Thus, if built, South Stream would further strengthen bilateral relations between Russia and its European partner states. This, in turn, would increase Moscow' political influence over these states.

Besides that, if South Stream was built, allowing Moscow to direct gas to Europe through an alternative route, it is highly likely that Ukraine's fear of losing transit fees (€3.2 bn) would further slow down or disrupt the country's process of Westernisation (Baran, 2009).

Furthermore, the construction of South Stream would also reduce the attractiveness of competing pipeline projects such as Nabucco, a project that aimed to diversify European gas imports away from Russia.

Overall, while South Stream made absolute sense from the financial point of view, it would undeniably also serve Russia's political interests. Despite, however, the economic and political importance of the South Stream project for Russia, strategic documents such as the ES-2020 reveal that Moscow had assigned priority to the Nord Stream pipeline.

6.4 The Nord Stream Project

The Nord Stream project is a gas pipeline that connects Russia directly to Europe. It runs across the Baltic Sea, from Portovaya Bay near Vyborg (Russia) to Lubmin near Greifswald (Germany). The project consists of two parallel lines on the seabed, with a length of 1,224 kilometres and a diameter of 1,220 millimetres (48 inches), and a total capacity of 55 bcm of natural gas per year (Nord Stream, 2016). The first of the two lines of Nord Stream I was inaugurated in November 2011 while the second line, which runs in parallel to line 1, was completed in April 2012.

Figure 7.1 Nord Stream pipeline project

Source: Samuel Bailey - https://search.creativecommons.org/photos/cfe8e710-7d8b-428e-b886-81dee3b5f5a8

The total investment of the project is assessed at €7.4 billion, with 30 per cent equity contributions from shareholders and 70 per cent project financing from the market. The project involves five major companies, OAO Gazprom (Russia -51 per cent), PEG Infrastruktur AG

(Germany - 15.5 per cent), BASF SE/Wintershall Holding GmbH (Germany - 15.5 per cent), NV Nederlandse Gasunie (Netherlands - 9 per cent) and ENGIE (France - 9 percent) (Nord Stream, 2016).

Significance for Europe

Nord Stream I is an important project for Europe for several reasons. The most important of which is securing the flow of more gas to Europe to meet increased demand in future. According to the IEA, the EU's annual demand for natural gas will increase from 307 bcm in 2011 to 456 bcm by 2040 (IEA, 2014). By connecting the EU with the largest gas reserves in the world, it is argued that Nord Stream I can meet about one-third of the additional demand (Nord Stream, 2016). With a capacity of 55 bcm of natural gas per year, equivalent to the amount of energy that is transported by 600-700 LNG carriers or produced by 148,000 wind turbines, Nord Stream I can supply more than 26 million EU households per year (ibid).

Considering its potential to contribute to European gas supply security, it comes as no surprise that the European Parliament and Council, under the EU's Trans-European Energy Networks (TEN-E) guidelines (Decision 1364/2006/EC), characterised the project as being in the 'European interest'. However, although both EU and Germany have repeatedly acknowledged the importance of the project for European energy security, many in the West did not view Nord Stream I as a commercial project but as a political one that Russia could use as a foreign policy tool.

6.4.1 Economic and Commercial Rationale

Despite the claims that Nord Stream is a political project, important factors suggest that the pipeline makes sense from an economic and commercial point of view. For example, the

participation of major European companies in the project, as in the case of South Stream, indicates that Nord Stream I investment was justifiable. There is little chance that European energy giants would invest in this costly pipeline unless it made sense commercially.

Furthermore, according to a study conducted by Chyong, Noël and Reiner (2010), at least three important factors contribute to the positive economic value of the Nord Stream pipeline. First of all, Nord Stream I has lower transportation costs when compared to the existing alternatives. Second, the construction of the pipeline may have a positive impact on lowering Ukraine's transit fees. Finally, the pipeline could be considered as insurance against transit disruption risks through Ukraine (ibid).

More concretely, Chyong, Noël and Reiner's study shows that the 'pipeline's owners will get 55% of the maximum achievable net present value under the base case demand scenario' (ibid, 18). The authors suggest that the pipeline would be profitable even 'under a scenario of declining gas demand in Europe' (ibid, 19).

However, according to Chyong, Noël and Reiner, the 'economic case for Nord Stream primarily rests on overcoming the dominant position of Ukraine as a provider of transit services' (ibid). The study predicts that more than 90 per cent of the gas transported through Nord Stream I will be diverted away from the existing transit corridors, mainly from Ukraine, thus making the case that Nord Stream is not about bringing more gas to Europe but bringing it through a different route (ibid).

However, although the authors find that Nord Stream has a positive net present value, they admit that 'that does not mean that the project has no serious political implications for Europe' (ibid, 19).

6.4.2 Political Motives

Similarly to South Stream, Nord Stream could be used as an alternative route to deliver gas to Europe, bypassing all high-risk transit states. This, in turn, would deprive these countries of their income from transit fees and the leverage they enjoyed over Russia as transit countries. The threat of being deprived of an important source of revenue alone could force these states to make painful concessions to Russia.

Furthermore, many scholars and analysts see pipelines like Nord Stream I as tools that could allow Russia to regain its lost influence in Central Eastern Europe. For example, Stanislau Husak, a Belarusian energy expert, told RFE/RL's Belarus Service that Russia would use Nord Stream I to turn Belarus and Ukraine into 18th-century type colonies. He also said that this and similar pipeline projects aim to nullify the chances of Belarus and Ukraine becoming independent from Russia (Coalson, 2011). In fact, the analyst claimed that 'all this is being pursued within the framework of a single policy -- the policy of colonising this region' (ibid). This view, as the next sections will demonstrate, is dominant among western scholars and experts.

In any case, the importance of the construction of Nord Stream for the Russian Administration is evident in Putin's personal involvement in the promotion of the project. For example, in 2009, Putin made a personal call to the Danish Prime Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen to allow Gazprom to lay the pipeline across the Baltic Sea (Spiegel, 2009). Putin has also built up close personal relations with top European politicians to ensure political support for the pipeline. For example, in the case of Nord Stream, his friendship with Chancellor Schröder has proven to be 'extremely useful' (Baran, 2008, 10). Not only did Schröder become the 'biggest promoter of Nord Stream as a "European project"' but he also extended a €1 billion government credit guarantee to Nord Stream before stepping down in

2005 and taking the role of chairman of the shareholders' committee of Nord Stream AG (Baran, 2008, 10). And Schröder was not the only high-profile European leader recruited to the project. The former Finnish Prime Minister Paavo Lipponen was also invited to become a member of the Nord Stream Board of Directors (Baran, 2008; Bugajski, 2009).

Baran argues that the involvement of high-profile European politicians in the Nord Stream project demonstrated 'how Putin and Gazprom have been able to buy influence and legitimacy' (Baran, 2008, 10). The author also suggests that after realising that Europe 'did not and was not going to stand united' when it comes to energy, the Kremlin set a precedent for seeking bilateral energy agreements with other European states (ibid, 10).

According to Baran (2008), this, in turn, prevented EU member states from holding united positions on other important issues. Baran notes that following the invasion of Georgia in August 2008, Frank Walter Steinmeier, Germany's Foreign Minister back then - now President of Germany, opposed the Membership Action Plan (MAP) for Georgia and was reluctant to take a firm position toward Moscow (Baran 2008, 10). The author attributes this reluctance to the 'special' energy partnership with Russia. Although, in this case, Steinmeier's opposition to MAP for Georgia was due to concerns that 'encircling Russia would be unnecessarily provocative' (Sakwa, 2016, 4), one could argue that gas pipelines could be used to serve Russia's foreign policy objectives, besides the country's economic interests.

Busygina finds the use of energy power as a foreign policy tool entirely rational since it is readily available, and it enables the Russian leadership to take decisions and respond quickly to developments (Busygina, 2018). However, this is precisely what raised concerns in Washington. Policymakers in the US were alarmed by the use of energy as a tool of political power, and its description as such in strategic Russian documents, as it indicated Kremlin's intention to use the 'policy of cutting-off energy supplies' for political reasons (Haas, 2009, 4).

Following requests from the US Congress, numerous reports were commissioned to investigate whether Russia exploits the energy dependency of its neighbouring states to advance its interests. According to Mix, Washington was concerned about the impact Russian energy dominance could have on presenting a united transatlantic position when it comes to issues related to Moscow (Mix, 2015, 8). In that context, successive US Administrations have encouraged European member states to diversify supplies away from Russia, supported the development of alternative sources, and encouraged the increase of energy efficiency in energy-dependent countries (Mix, 2015).

6.5 The US Perspective on Russian energy policy (2005- 2014)

6.5.1 Bush Administration (2005-2009)

Several developments at the end of Bush's first term led to a change in Washington's Russia policy. Russia's arms sales to unsavoury regimes, the use of energy as a foreign policy tool, efforts to contain the US presence in the post-Soviet space, and the country's authoritarian drift led to the reconsideration of Washington's Russian policy (Graham, 2008, 4).

At the same time, Russia also began reconsidering its US policy, as several Washington activities raised concerns about US intentions. The US plans to locate a missile defence system in Eastern Europe, Washington's growing presence in the post-Soviet space, and NATO's expansion towards Russia's borders reinforced Moscow's suspicion that the US was trying to undermine Russia's economic and security interests in its backyard.

Overall, the gap between the perceptions of US and Russian FPE over the international system (Graham, 2008) and the colour revolutions in Georgia (2003), Ukraine (2004) and Kyrgystan (2005) led to strains in the relationship between the two countries (Mitchell, 2012). As Graham wisely points out, joint statements in 2005 on cooperation in various sectors and

‘commitments to deepen cooperation on a range of issues could not hide the growing mutual discontent’ (Graham, 2008, 4).

Energy Sector

When it comes to the energy sector, during Bush’s first term, Washington failed to foresee that the increased energy exports to Europe would fuel Russia’s resurgence. This, however, soon changed. By 2004, the Intelligence Services became increasingly aware of the importance of energy exports, not only for the Russian economy and military sector but also for the country’s effort to restrict the US presence in the post-Soviet space and to restore its influence in the region (Tenet, 2004).

The case of Ukraine presented an excellent example of how energy could be used as political leverage to contain what Moscow saw as an aggressive Euro-Atlantic push towards Russia’s borders. Following the Orange Revolution (2004 - 2005), which resulted in the victory of the US-backed candidate Viktor Yushchenko in the 2004 Ukrainian presidential elections, Moscow introduced energy sanctions that undermined the Ukrainian economy. This was done by exploiting Ukraine’s dependence on Russian energy sources, imposing a high price on gas and cutting off supplies in 2006 and 2009 (Newnham, 2013, 115). According to Newnham, these energy sanctions ‘helped pave the way for Yanukovych’s election’ in 2010 (2013, 115).

Yanukovych, the Russian backed candidate, had promised Putin that ‘he would end Ukraine’s policy of seeking membership in NATO’ (Taylor, 2014). A promise that he kept. Following his statement in May 2010 that further NATO integration was an ‘unrealistic prospect’ for Ukraine, in June 2010, the Ukrainian Parliament passed a bill that ‘confirmed the country’s nonaligned status and effectively cancelled any prospect of joining NATO’ (Taylor, 2014).

The effective use of energy as a foreign policy tool in the case of Ukraine raised concerns in Washington about Moscow's willingness to use gas supplies for political ends. With many of the Central and Eastern European states being dependent on Russian gas, the US feared that Russia could use its energy card to influence politics in any of the dependent countries.

Concerns over the use of energy as a power tool are expressed in several Senate and House of Representatives resolutions. For example, Resolution S.Res.530 (2006) refers to 'cascading energy shortages' in European countries as a result of the disagreement between Moscow and Kyiv over the price of natural gas sold to Ukraine. In a similar tone, the Resolution H.Res 500 (2007), points out that efforts to establish a cartel, after major gas exporting states met in 2007 in Doha under Russian leadership were, 'prejudicial to the security of the United States and of the world as a whole'. This is because 'Russia has repeatedly demonstrated its willingness to use its role as a supplier of oil and gas, to exert political pressure on other countries, such as Georgia, Ukraine, and Belarus, among others'.

In the light of the fact that the European dependence on Russian natural gas was likely to increase in the coming years, the document stresses the importance of adopting measures that aim at reducing the reliance of highly dependent states on Russian gas (ibid). These measures include creating a joint strategy with all gas dependent countries, preventing the development of a cartel, and diversifying supplies (ibid).

Similarly, Resolution S.Res.612 (2008) points out that Russian energy policy has created the perception that Moscow uses its energy exports, as 'a means of political pressure on countries that seek closer ties with the United States and Euro-Atlantic partners' (Resolution S.Res.612, 2008).

Concerns about the use of energy as political leverage were also expressed by top US officials following the 2006 Russia-Ukraine gas crisis (Woehrel, 2010). For example, Secretary

of State Condoleezza Rice stated that the Kremlin had made ‘politically motivated efforts to constrain energy supply to Ukraine’ (Rice, 2007). Sean McCormack, a State Department spokesman also accused Moscow of using ‘energy for political purposes’ (Woehrel, 2009, 14). Similarly, Vice President Dick Cheney characterised Moscow’s strategy of ‘supply manipulation or attempts to monopolise transportations’ as ‘blackmail’ (Woehrel, 2009, 15).

Overall, all evidence suggests that from 2004 onwards, policymakers in Washington became increasingly aware of the importance of energy exports for Russia’s economic development and growing influence abroad. Washington also became increasingly concerned about the threat emanating from the increased dependence of its European allies on Russian resources; a reliance that Russia could exploit to advance its interests in the area.

In fact, following the 2006 Russia-Ukraine gas crisis, US-Russian relations plunged to their lowest level since the Cold War, with commentators suggesting that this could be the beginning of a new Cold War era. However, US-Russian relations became even tenser after the 2008 Georgian War, which led to the suspension of military ties between Russia and NATO countries. President Obama’s inauguration provided the opportunity to ‘reset’ US-Russian relations, but the positive momentum ended after Putin’s return to power.

6.5.2 The Obama Administration (2009-2013): Change in Leadership, but Change in Policy?

Early in 2009, Barrack Obama replaced George W. Bush at the White House. The change in leadership of the country and efforts to ‘reset’ US-Russian relations did not lead to substantial changes in Washington’s stance towards Russia’s energy policy in Europe. In fact, the US concerns over Europe’s dependence on Russian natural gas intensified following the 2009 Russia - Ukraine gas crisis.

During Obama's presidency, members of Congress repeatedly expressed their concerns about the threats emanating from the increased reliance of European states on Russian energy resources, urging Europe to work with the United States on the diversification of their supplies. More specifically, concerns were expressed during the hearing of the House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs in February 2009. The Committee Chairman, Howard Berman, and several witnesses criticised Russia for using its energy supplies as political leverage (US House of Representatives, 2009a). Other hearing transcripts also reveal US officials' strong support for the diversification of European supplies away from Russian resources (US House of Representatives, 2009b). For example, the transcript of the hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee reveals that Senators Kerry and Lugar hailed the signing of the intergovernmental Agreement on the US-backed Nabucco, a competing pipeline to South Stream, after criticising Russia for using its dominant position in the European gas market to project its influence in Europe (US Senate, 2009).

A close analysis of the Senate and House of Representative resolutions, CRS reports for Congress, and various testimonies and the statements of High US officials demonstrates that American concerns over Russian energy policy in the period 2005-2014 can be attributed to two main factors. First, the increased dependence on Russian supplies had the potential to undermine Euro-Atlantic security arrangements. Washington feared that Moscow could use bilateral energy agreements with major European powers and their dependence on Russian natural gas to project its influence on the European continent and weaken trans-Atlantic ties. Thus, Washington perceived any increase in Russian influence over its European allies as a threat to its interests in Europe.

Second, Russia's energy policy in the post-Soviet space was not congruent with US interests in the region. According to the documents, Moscow used oil and gas to re-establish its influence in the area and prevent former Soviet states from seeking membership in Euro-

Atlantic institutions. In other words, Russia was using its energy resources as a tool to counter the increasing US influence in the post-Soviet space.

In an effort to reduce the dependence of Europe on Russian energy resources, Washington adopted several measures. For example, the US has backed the construction of several pipelines to supply energy from Central Asia and Azerbaijan to Europe (Woehrel, 2009, 15). The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline (BTC), the South Caucasus Gas Pipeline (SCGP), the Turkey-Greece-Italy pipeline (TGI), the White Stream pipeline, and the Nabucco pipeline (an EU-sponsored project) were all US-backed projects whose primary aim was to reduce European reliance on Russian energy resources. The US support for these projects has attracted much attention.

Other measures include the establishment of the EU-US Energy Council and the state visits of high US officials to Gazprom's European partners, aiming to convince them to abandon their pipeline projects with Gazprom.

6.5.3 Nabucco pipeline

Since the 1990s, the West has been considering the construction of alternative pipelines, mainly from Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan (Stern 2014). However, the first discussion supported by the European Commission began in 2002. Five companies considered plans for constructing a 2,400-mile pipeline that would transfer 31bcm of gas from Turkmenistan to Eastern Europe. The pipeline, known as Nabucco, was named after an opera composed by the Italian composer Giuseppe Verdi. Naming the pipeline after the opera was not incidental; the plot of the opera deals with the subject of liberation, and the intention was to make Nabucco the symbol of liberation of European states from energy dependence on Russian gas.

Although Nabucco was identified as amongst the Union's highest priority energy projects (EC 2008, MEMO/08/703), a CRS report for the US Congress published in 2009 had characterised the prospects for the Nabucco pipeline as 'clouded' (Woehrel, 2009, 18). According to the report, Russia's plan to build 'alternative pipelines on similar routes' to 'steer European countries away from full support for U.S.-and EU-backed projects' significantly reduced the chances of Nabucco (ibid). One such pipeline was South Stream, often described as being in direct competition with Nabucco (ibid).

Nabucco was indeed cancelled, but only because the companies involved in the project concluded that the pipeline was commercially unviable (Stern, 2014; Youngs and Pishchikova, 2013). According to Stern, the project collapsed because no 'firm agreement on supply could be reached with Turkmenistan, and hopes of building a trans-Caspian pipeline (TCP) were stymied' by the unresolved disputes among the Caspian littoral states over the exploitation of energy resources in the Caspian Sea. (Stern, 2014, p 24). However, one has to admit that the participation of several EU states in the South Stream project did not help in gathering the necessary political backing for Nabucco.

Despite numerous warnings by experts that the project was doomed to fail, Washington put significant pressure on the involved parties, including the EU, to deliver the project on time (Traynor, 2009). Washington's strong political support resulted in the pipeline being characterised as a US-backed project. Rosenthal notes that the characterisation of Nabucco as a US-backed project goes as far 'as if EU involvement were a secondary matter' and the 'US was applying "pressure" on the EU to pursue it'(Rosenthal, 2008).

US support for the Nabucco pipeline is evident in the statements of high US officials. Matthew Bryza, a Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, declared after talks with senior EU officials that '[h]elping Europe diversify its gas supplies has become extremely urgent', adding that 'US backing for Nabucco was in the country's national interests' (Gow, 2008). Bryza

claimed that the US interest in the construction of alternatives to Russian pipelines lay in the fact that the US does not like monopolies in the energy sector, and it is simply a matter of business (Bryza, 2007). However, the claims that US interest in Russia's energy strategy is only a matter of business contradicts the statements of Amos Hochstein, the State Department's Special Envoy and Coordinator for International Energy Affairs. During a talk on how US shale gas will free Europe from Russia's grip, Hochstein explained that 'the move to diversify Europe's supplies of natural gas isn't about finding new markets for US companies, but rather to offset the influence of a newly aggressive Russia' (Eaton, 2016). These statements shed some light on Washington's interests and support for alternative pipeline projects to the Russian ones.

Several news articles published in 2008 also refer to the importance of Nabucco for the US. For example, James Jukwey of Reuters cites a statement made by a senior US official, according to which the importance of Nabucco for the US is paralleled to that of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (TBC) oil pipeline, as both aimed at diversifying European energy supplies away from (Jukwey, 2008). This explains why the 'United States threw its full diplomatic weight behind the European Union's troubled Nabucco pipeline project to bring gas from the Caspian Basin to central Europe' (ibid). In a similar tone, David Gow, in an article published in The Guardian, reveals that the Bush Administration urged the EU 'to stop dithering over the building of a $6bn' Nabucco pipeline and 'reduce its growing dependence on Russia's Gazprom' (Gow, 2008). These publications suggest that the US had put pressure on the EU to proceed with the development of the Nabucco project, portraying the US as more interested than Europe in the construction of the pipeline.

Besides backing the construction of alternative pipelines, Washington has also adopted several other measures that aimed to reduce European dependence on Russian gas. One such measure was the initiative to propose the establishment of the EU-US Energy Council.

6.5.4 EU-US Energy Council

The US efforts to contain the growing dependence of its European allies on Russia took a more organised form in 2009. In June of that year, Ambassador Richard Morningstar, the Special Envoy for Eurasian Energy, sent a letter to Minister Fule, High Representative (H.R.) Solana, the President of the Commission, and Commissioners Ferrero-Waldner, Piebalgs and Potocnik, proposing the establishment of an EU-US Energy Council. The EU responded positively in September of 2009, suggesting the following three areas of cooperation: Energy Policies, Global Energy Security, and Global Markets and Energy Technologies Research Cooperation (European Commission, 2009).

Since its creation, the Council meets annually, alternatively in the US and the EU, and reports to the EU-US Summit. On the US side, the Council is chaired by the US Secretary of State and the US Secretary of Energy, while on the EU side, it is represented by the EU HR, Vice President for Energy Union and the EU Commissioner for Climate and Energy (EU Commission, 2009).

The time of the establishment of the Energy Council is not random. The proposal for its creation was tabled following the 2009 Russia-Ukraine gas crisis. This is also reflected in the Council's agenda. Despite the number of energy-related issues of common interest discussed during the meetings, European energy security has always been the top item on the agenda.

For example, the EU-US Energy Council was focused on the security of supply to the European Union by means of diversification of sources and routes to 'help meet Europe's long-term natural gas requirements' (Council of the European Union, 2010b, 1). Energy security and policy were also the focus of the Fourth Council meeting, held in 2012. During the meeting, the Council emphasised 'consolidating the EU internal energy market', which had significantly

reduced the risks of supply disruption for the vulnerable member states, diversifying choices of gas sources and routes, and improving the prospects for renewable energy producers (European Union, 2012, 1). The Fifth EU-US Energy Council, held in 2013, was exclusively focused on the EU's energy security challenges, mainly the threat emanating from energy dependence on Russia, and efforts to address these challenges (European Commission, 2014c). The Council reaffirmed its support for the development of the Southern Gas Corridor, the completion of an integrated, common EU energy market and other measures that address the external energy dependency through diversification of routes and supplies (European Commission, 2014c). In a similar tone, the Sixth EU-US Energy Council, held in 2014, criticised the use of energy as a political tool and discussed how Washington could contribute to the strengthening of energy security in Europe. Alternative and new sources of supply and critical infrastructure developments were also discussed at this meeting, and the Council welcomed the prospect of US LNG exports to Europe (European Commission, 2014e).

Overall, since its establishment in 2009, the EU-US Energy Council has met eight times, with European energy security being the main priority each time. The press statements demonstrate that the diversification of supplies and efforts to reduce the dependence on Russian natural gas has been the top priority of the Council. However, Herlitschka (2012) notes that while the EU-US Energy Council was initiated to provide a new framework for deepening the transatlantic dialogue on energy-related issues, it failed to achieve what it hoped to accomplish in terms of concrete results.

Nevertheless, considering the participation of high-profile officials in the Council, this forum has provided an excellent opportunity for top US officials such as the Secretary of State and Secretary of the Department of Energy, to convey Washington's concerns about European dependence on Russian energy sources to top decision-makers in the EU.

The forum has also offered more opportunities to US officials to stay up to date with developments in the European energy sector, strengthen the US voice over energy-related issues in the EU, and influence the future direction of the European energy policy (Clinton, 2014, 212).

6.5.5 State Visits

The US efforts to decrease the dependence of European states on Russian gas were not limited to the proposal and establishment of the EU-US Energy Council or the promotion of alternative pipeline projects. Washington also employed the policy of sending high-level US officials to European capitals to discuss European energy security issues and convince the Europeans to diversify their supplies away from Russia. The written testimonies of US Deputy Assistant Secretary for Energy Diplomacy, Amos J. Hochstein, and US Deputy Assistant Secretary, Hoyt Yee, provide an insight into the high-level US official visits to European states and their efforts to deal with the growing European dependence on Russian energy.

For example, Hochstein revealed in his testimony that President Obama, during his visit to Poland in June 2014, had discussed the issue of European energy security with the Polish Prime Minister Tusk and other leaders in the region. Hochstein also acknowledged his own and Vice President Biden's visits to Romania and Cyprus, where Biden raised the issue of energy security with the leaders of those countries (US Senate, 2014).

According to the same source, Washington's European energy security efforts intensified after the 2009 Russia-Ukraine gas crisis, with the State Department intensely advocating diversification of supplies away from Russia across the European continent, and in particular in Central and Eastern Europe (ibid). Hochstein's testimony reveals that Washington has been working 'hand-in-hand' with the EU Commission, the Eastern/Central European

countries, and often meets with the Visegrad-4+ states (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia, plus Bulgaria, Romania and Croatia) to ensure that European states are taking the matter of diversification of energy supplies away from Russia seriously.

In his testimony, the special envoy also listed the various forms of involvement and support the US had provided to European states in an effort to reduce Europe's energy reliance on Russia. These include US support for the development of the Southern Corridor and east-to-west and west-to-east interconnections of infrastructure in Central and Eastern Europe and US support for the construction of LNG terminals at key European coasts.

Hoyt Yee, the US Deputy Assistant Secretary, also referred in his testimony to the visits of members of the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs Committee to key European capitals and noted that these visits reaffirmed 'that the United States is as committed as ever to security...of the people of the region' (US Senate, 2014).

Overall, the evidence shows that European energy security remains a key national security priority for the US, and Washington has both 'in word and action' encouraged the adoption of measures that would reduce the dependence of its European allies on Russian gas. As evident from the analysis of primary and secondary sources, although US efforts to diversify European gas supplies date back to the Cold War era, these efforts intensified following the 2006 and 2009 Russia-Ukraine gas crises. In addition to accusing Moscow of using energy as political leverage, Washington has adopted several measures that aimed to reduce the reliance of European states on Russian gas.

After investigating how the US and Russian interests clash over the construction of the two pipelines, the next chapter will focus on examining to what degree the developments in the European energy (gas) sector are a response to external pressure and incentives, in addition to being internally generated. The overall findings of this case study will be discussed at the conclusion of the next chapter.

Chapter Seven - The Case of the South Stream and Nord Stream I Pipelines (Part 2)

The previous chapter discussed how US and Russian interests clashed over EU-Russian energy trade and the expansion of Russian gas infrastructure to Europe (Level 1). This chapter will investigate how European states responded to Great Power pressure and incentives and assess their impact on energy policies (Level 2). The first section of this chapter investigates the cases of South Stream's European partners, Hungary and briefly Bulgaria. The next section then examines the case of the Nord Stream with a focus on Germany and Poland. Finally, the findings of this case study will be used to discuss to what extent great power competition affected the development of a common European energy policy.

7.1 Level 2: Intra-EU views on South Stream and Nord Stream I

The previous section looked into how US and Russian interests clashed over Europe's energy sector between 2004 and 2014 and discussed the measures Moscow and Washington adopted to maximize their influence over Europe while at the same time containing the influence of each other. This section will discuss how European states translated the opportunities and threats generated by the Great Power security competition into their energy policy decisions.

In order to shed light on how states translate systemic incentives and threats into specific policy decisions, our analysis will focus only on the leaders' images and strategic culture as intervening variables. This is because, as explained in Chapter Three of this thesis, the high stakes involved in making an energy-related decision make other intervening variables less important as they will have fewer opportunities to influence the decision-making process.

The first section will focus on Hungary's South Stream policy, while the second section will discuss the main issues surrounding Germany's and Poland's Nord Stream I policies.

7.2 South Stream: Hungary's interpretation of the external environment

Hungary's relations with Russia were significantly improved from 2002 onwards. This is evident by the number of presidential or prime ministerial meetings that took place between the two countries under the governments of Medgyessy, Gyurcsány and Orbán. Whilst from 1991 to 2002, only four such meetings took place, during Medgyessy's government alone (2002-2004), the leaders of the two countries met five times (Orban, 2008). After 2002, the meetings between Budapest and Moscow were dominated by economic issues, and more specifically by considerations of Russian gas pipeline plans and Moscow's interest in Hungary's energy sector (Orban, 2008, 114).

7.2.1 Medgyessy Government: 2002-2004

Under the reign of the Medgyessy Government, Hungary paid special attention to developing relations between Budapest and Moscow. The visit of the Hungarian Prime Minister to Moscow in December 2002 provided a sound basis for strengthening these relations, while the visit of Russian Prime Minister Kasyanov to Budapest in September 2003 demonstrated Russia's interest in further improving its relations with Hungary (Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2005). During this period, Russian was one of Hungary's most important economic and trading partners. Despite a decline in previous years, trade between the two countries recovered in 2003 (Hungarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2005). However, the overall improvement in the relations of the two countries from 2002 onwards is mostly

attributed to Hungary's non-critical stance towards both Russia's domestic and foreign policies.

7.2.2 New Government, the same approach to Russia: 2004 – 2009

Following Medgyessy's resignation due to a conflict with his party's coalition partner, Ferenc Gyurcsány was elected Prime Minister on September 29, 2004. Socor (2006a) describes Gyurcsány as 'one of Hungary's wealthiest businessmen', who in 2006 appointed Kinga Goencz, an academic with no prior foreign-policy experience, as Foreign Affairs Minister, which allowed him to retain control over foreign affairs.

Hungary, under Gyurcsány's leadership, was considered to 'have embarked on a "third path" between the institutional West, where Hungary belongs, and Russia toward which Gyurcsány and his closest associates seem increasingly to gravitate' (Socor, 2006a). However, Socor (ibid) suggests that that option 'lost its rationale and forfeited any legitimacy since Hungary became a member of the European Union and NATO'. Despite criticism from the West, the Gyurcsány Government characterized Hungary's Russia policy as pragmatic: one that is focused on expanding trade and in particular energy relations with Russia.

When it comes to Hungary's energy partnership with Russia, the first deliveries of Russian natural gas to Hungary were launched in the mid-1970s. By 2007, Hungary had become largely dependent on gas imports from Russia (IEA, 2014), with Gazprom supplying Hungary with 7.5 bcm of natural gas, which is approximately 70 per cent of Hungary's total natural gas imports (Gazprom, 2008b).

Ironically, Hungary's energy partnership with Russia was reinforced following the 2006 Russia-Ukrainian gas dispute. While Budapest was aware of the challenges of relying on a single gas supplier, the EU's failure to speed up the delivery of alternative pipeline projects,

such as Nabucco, led Hungary to seek participation in other projects, namely the Russian-backed South Stream project (Ostrowski and Butler, 2018).

According to Gazprom's archives, contacts between Hungary and Russia for the construction of South Stream date back to 2006, when Gazprom and the MOL Group (a Hungarian gas and oil company) agreed to set up a Project Company responsible for conducting a feasibility study for a pipeline project and an underground gas storage system in Hungary (Gazprom, 2007b). In order to execute the Agreement signed in 2006, MOL and Gazprom set up the SEPCO Project Company on a parity basis, based in Hungary (Gazprom, 2007b).

In March 2007, Putin received Gyurcsány at his residence in Novo Ogaryovo, where they discussed 'the whole range of Russian-Hungarian relations and, first and foremost, cooperation in the energy sector' (President of Russia, 2007b). Then in 2008, a Gazprom delegation visited Hungary, where Alexey Miller participated in a working meeting with Gyurcsány. The parties managed to agree on all of the critical provisions of the draft Intergovernmental Agreement, which was expected to be signed in the near future (Gazprom, 2008b). Gyurcsány revisited Moscow in 2009 when he attended Russian-Hungarian intergovernmental consultations and discussed various issues concerning the bilateral cooperation of the two countries (President of Russia, 2009).

Gyurcsány's government has often been criticized for favouring South Stream over Nabucco. This is because his bilateral negotiations with Russia had the potential to generate uncertainty about the latter's viability and to sabotage investments in the Nabucco project, as European gas demand did not justify the construction of two pipelines (Shchedrov, 2008). Yet, the Hungarian Prime Minister did not view the two pipelines as competing. His official position was that Hungary is interested in both South Stream and Nabucco and that Budapest's bilateral agreements with Moscow did 'not contradict, but rather favoured Europe's interests by making energy supplies more reliable and predictable' (Socor, 2006a).

Gyurcsány's time in office came to an end in 2009, when he resigned after a no-confidence vote in April of the same year. He was succeeded by György Gordon Bajnai. Bajnai served as Prime Minister only for a year and did not put himself forward for the next election. In May 2010, he was succeeded by Viktor Orbán.

7.2.3 Change in leadership but not in the stance towards Russia: 2010- 2017

Since the 2010 parliamentary elections, the Hungarian political arena has been dominated by a single conservative-rightist party, the Fidesz Hungarian Civic Alliance. Fidesz gained two-thirds of the seats in the National Assembly in 2010, 2014 and 2018 elections (Lontay, 2015, 2). Lontay points out that since 2010, Fidesz party members have occupied the most important political and administrative positions in Hungary, while 'within the course of elite change' this trend was extended to the business sector as well (ibid). As a result, Hungary turned into a centrally controlled state controlled by a small elite (ibid, 3).

Since coming into office in 2010, Viktor Orbán has been frequently criticized for authoritarian practices both at home and abroad. His measures to control the media in the country were criticized in 2011 by the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, among others. While his efforts to force 274 judges into early retirement, limit the independence of the Central Bank and data protection authority prompted the European Commission to start infringement proceedings against Hungary in 2012 (Gostyńska-Jakubowska and Bond, 2014).

Furthermore, particularly worrying was his inaugural speech to the parliament following his re-election in May 2014, when he called for autonomy for ethnic Hungarians living in central Europe, including Ukraine (Than, 2014). Even more worrying was the fact that during a speech to the ethnic Hungarians in Romania, on July 28, 2014, Orbán expressed

the intention to abandon liberal democracy in favour of an illiberal state, pointing at Russia and China as successful models.

Orbán's governing style has also had a profound impact on energy policymaking. While the country's energy policy must result from the active participation of members of the opposition, representatives of the energy industry, trade unions and NGO's, in reality, the decision are made by a small Fidesz elite 'who push them through the Government and the Parliament' (Lontay, 2015, 3).

7.2.4 Energy policy under Orbán's government

Hungary's energy policy is defined by energy strategy documents issued by the government. The most important of which are the National Renewable Energy Action Plan up to 2020 (2010), the National Energy Strategy up to year 2030 (2012), Hungary's National Energy Efficiency Plan (2015), the National Strategy for Building Energy (2015) and the National Climate Change Strategy 2008 – 2025 (2008), drafted in accordance with EU guidelines and regulations. A careful analysis of these documents shows that Budapest's primary goal is to reduce its energy dependence on external suppliers by increasing the share of low-carbon energy production (renewables and nuclear energy), energy efficiency, and integrating into the European energy infrastructure.

However, Orbán's decarbonisation policy, which was based on the development of the country's nuclear capacity, has attracted much criticism. His contract with Moscow for building and financing a 2x1200 MW extension of the Paks Nuclear Power Plant was seen as an example of Orbán's 'cosying up to Russian President Vladimir Putin' (Zalan, 2018). In general, although Orbán has attempted to strike a balance between strengthening US-

Hungarian relations and developing closer cooperation with Russia, Budapest's energy policy put Orbán in the crosshairs of Washington's political elites (Engdahl, 2014).

Without a doubt, there are a number of reasons why Orbán's government is not seen in a positive light in Washington. However, according to Engdahl (2014), his 'cardinal sin is his deepening relationship with Russia and his defiance of Washington, in signing an agreement with Gazprom for bringing the Russian South Stream gas pipeline into the EU via Hungary'. In fact, Engdahl goes as far as to wonder whether Orbán's refusal to 'join the new US and EU Cold War against Russia' could make Hungary 'the target of a US/EU sponsored regime change?' (ibid).

An article published in the New York Times on November 5, 2014, titled *Hungary's Dangerous Slide,* also referred to the West's 'hurt feelings' over Hungary's participation in South Stream, while a news article by Reuters published in November 2014, reported Washington's efforts 'to check Hungary's drift into the Kremlin's orbit' (Radosavljevic and Than, 2014).

Hungary's commitment to South Stream has also led to intra-EU tensions, with several MEPs questioning the South Stream contribution to the EU's energy security.

7.3 Intra-EU tensions over South Stream and Nord Stream

Hungary's commitment to building a Kremlin-backed gas pipeline (along with other European partners of South Stream, including Italy, Austria, Bulgaria and Greece) raised tension at the intra-European level. Several MEPs submitted written questions to the European Commission concerning the compliance of the pipeline with European law and its impact on European energy security.

In February 2008, MEP Cristian Silviu Buşoi submitted a question (European Parliament, 2008b) under the title 'Projected South Stream Gas Pipeline'. Buşoi asked the Commission for clarification on several issues related to the South Stream, with the most important related to whether the project meets the 'objectives set out by the European Council and the European Parliament concerning the diversification of the EU's sources of gas supply'.

Andris Piebalgs, the Energy Commissioner from 2004-2009, responded to Buşoi's question by stating that Nabucco is the EU supported pipeline that meets the objectives set out by the Commission. However, he pointed out that other 'projects can be considered, provided they prove to be economically and environmentally viable' (EU Parliament, 2008c). Piebalgs explained that while South Stream does not offer a 'realistic diversification of sources by country' or 'commercial diversification (allowing companies other than Gazprom to sell gas)', it 'still offers a diversification and duplication of supply routes', and thus it 'may contribute to the security of gas supply in the European Union, provided that it brings new volumes of gas and that it does not divert the existing volumes already supplied to the EU' (EU Parliament, 2008c). Piebalgs also added that the demand for natural gas in the EU is expected to rise, which means that the EU will have to expand import infrastructure to meet increased import demand. Thus, he stated that 'all current planned infrastructure projects to the EU market are needed, and additional ones must also be found' (ibid).

To Buşoi's question whether the Commission believes that the Member States should 'speak with one voice' regarding proposed participation in energy projects undertaken by third countries (ibid), Piebalgs replied that

> The Commission strongly believes that the EU needs to have a coordinated approach and a common coherent message delivered vis-à-vis third countries concerning all energy projects which have an impact on the European Union.

Piebalgs added that EU Member states have already agreed on the development of 'speaking with one voice' in 2006 on external energy matters and that the European Commission is

promoting this intensely (ibid). From Andris Piebalgs' responses to Buşoi's questions, it is evident that before 2009, the European Commission, while it did not see South Stream as a project that could contribute to the diversification of European gas supplies, still held the view that it could enhance European energy security.

However, the stance of the Commission towards South Stream changed when the Third Energy Package (TEP) entered into force as it was concluded that the South Stream is non-compliant with the EU's TEP. According to De Micco, South Stream violates TEP because

> (1) Gazprom is the owner of both the transmission network and the gas to be exported; (2) Gazprom has not allowed third parties non-discriminatory access to the pipeline but has remained the sole shipper; (3) the proposed tariff structure – and in particular the link between oil and gas prices – is not in line with European law (De Micco, 2013, 2).

In this context, from 2010, the Commission began 'scrutinising Gazprom's contracts with the five transit countries, investigating them for noncompliance with EU legislation' (Korteweg, 2014; Oettinger, 2011).

On June 6, 2012, Konrad Szymanski and Giles Chichester submitted a set of questions to the Commission. One question was whether the Commission intended to accede to the demands for South Stream to be excluded from the rules of the Third Energy Package, including the third-party access principle (European Parliament, 2012). In response, in December 2013, the European Commission officially urged Gazprom's European partners to renegotiate the South Stream agreement because these agreements were incompatible in their present form with the EU's Third Energy Package.

In fact, on June 2, 2014, as the next section will show, the Commission brought infringement proceedings against Bulgaria (another EU partner in the South Stream project) over breaching the EU's public procurement and environmental protection rules, which led to the collapse of the governing coalition (Gardner, 2014). Along with other factors, it also led to the suspension of the pipeline.

7.4 The Case of South Stream in Bulgaria and the cancellation of the pipeline project

On July 25, 2008, the Bulgarian Parliament ratified a $15 billion Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with Russia, meant to frame the building of its section of South Stream. In July 2009, Bulgaria held an early parliamentary election, but the new prime minister, Boyko Borisov, decided to honour the IGA signed by the previous government (Borisov, 2009). Although in an interview with Euronews, Borisov made it clear that Nabucco is the priority project for Sofia, he stated that Bulgaria is planning to go ahead with both pipeline projects (ibid).

However, Sofia backed out in 2010, and Russia sought to redirect South Stream undersea to Romania (a supporter of the Nabucco project), playing one country against the other (Ivan, 2016; Black, 2014). Nevertheless, Black notes that soon Bulgaria resumed its commitment to the South Stream and 'Romania wavered over Nabucco, causing the EU to cry foul over presumed under-the-table manipulation from Gazprom' (2014, 117). In any case, following the visit of the Russian energy minister to Varna, on July 16, 2010, Sofia and Moscow inked the Roadmap to perform a technical and economic assessment of Bulgaria's section of the South Stream pipeline. In October of the same year, Gazprom and Bulgarian Energy Holding signed an Agreement on a feasibility study, which was completed in December 2011 (Gazprom, 2012).

In 2014, the European Commission initiated an infringement procedure against Bulgaria on the grounds of incompatibility of its Intergovernmental Agreement with the Union's Third Energy Package (TEP) and the legality of procurement for the pipeline (Stern et al., 2015). Although the Commission initiated the infringement procedure against Bulgaria before Plamen Oresharski's surprise announcement of the suspension of South Stream on June 8, 2014, the works for the construction of the pipeline continued as planned.

It is important to mention that the announcement of the suspension of the pipeline came only after the visit of US senators John McCain, Christopher Murphy, and Ron Johnson to Sofia, on June 8, 2014 (Recknagel, 2014; Euractiv, 2014b). Several articles published on well-known media platforms linked the visits of high US officials with Sofia's decision to abandon the construction of the pipeline. For example, the BBC published a short article on June 8, 2014, under the title 'Bulgaria halts work on gas pipeline after US talks' (BBC, 2014). The article quoted Oresharski's statement that Sofia would 'decide on further developments following consultations with Brussels', but it was clear from the article that this statement came after pressure from the US senators (BBC, 2014). Similar claims were made in articles published on Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty and Euractiv (Recknagel, 2014; Euractiv, 2014b).

Another media platform, Radio Bulgaria, reported that after the meeting with Premier Oresharski, McCain stated that Washington 'would like to see Russia taking a smaller part in the construction of the South Stream gas pipeline' (Radio Bulgaria, 2014), while the US ambassador to Sofia, Marcie Ries, warned that sanctions could hit Bulgarian companies working with Stroytransgaz. Stroytransgaz is the company that was awarded the contract for the construction of the Bulgarian stretch of the pipeline, and one of whose shareholders, Gennady Timchenko, was on the US sanction list (Euractiv, 2014b; Radio Bulgaria, 2014; Assenova, 2014).

Despite the country's strong initial support for the project, US and Brussels' diplomatic pressure not only played a decisive role in Bulgaria's decision to halt construction but also led to the collapse of the governing coalition (Gardner, 2014).

Eventually, on December 1, 2014, following the delays in construction, the Russian President Vladimir Putin, announced while on a visit to Turkey that Moscow would abandon the development of the South Stream pipeline (Pirani and Yafimava, 2016; Boyd-Barrett, 2017;

Reed and Kanter, 2014). Instead, Moscow and Ankara agreed on the Turkish Stream, a new pipeline of a similar capacity running from Russia onto the Turkish mainland across the Black Sea.

The announcement of the suspension of the South Stream 'caused a mixture of surprise, relief and dismay' (Thorpe, 2014). While it certainly brought relief in Ukraine, it raised concerns in Hungary. Hungary's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Péter Szijjártó, stated that 'it was regrettable that the South Stream gas pipeline project had been scrapped', stressing that Hungary now needed to find new sources to ensure the security of its energy supplies (Website of the Hungarian Government, 2014). At the same time, the newly re-elected Bulgarian PM, Boyko Borisov, travelled to Brussels to protest about his country's loss of 'investment, jobs and gas transfer fees with the re-routing of South Stream' (Kanter, 2014).

Interestingly, however, the announcement of the suspension of the project did not have the expected reaction from the Commission. One would expect that the Commission would be pleased with the suspension. Yet, just a couple of days following Putin's announcement, the President of the Commission, Jean-Claude Juncker, after meeting with the Bulgarian MP, stated that 'South Stream can be built - the conditions have been clear for a long time. The ball is in the court of Russia', expressing the hope, that after all, the pipeline would be built (World Bulletin, 2014).

Juncker's statement implies that the European Commission considered South Stream as beneficial to the European Union, despite the fact that the project was often portrayed as highly political and of no use to Europe. However, it is important to stress that the President of the Commission made it clear that while he wanted 'energy to flow to Bulgaria, to the whole of Europe', he would 'not accept any blackmailing on energy matters' (World Bulletin, 2014). Many experts, such as Egenhofer, suggested that Juncker's statement was a message to Moscow that the European Union will not be divided over South Stream (Kanter, 2014).

In contrast to Europe, the US appeared to be more pleased with the announcement of the cancellation of the project, with Senator McCain (2014) stating that Putin's decision to abandon the project was a 'victory' for Europe's energy security. In his view, South Stream would have consolidated Putin's control over European energy supplies and 'granted him unprecedented power in the international arena' (ibid). He explained that for this exact reason, he

> urged the Bulgarian government in June to collaborate more closely with their European partners to secure its energy interests and refrain from working with entities sanctioned by the United States (ibid).

McCain also stated that he was pleased to see that US efforts were successful and that 'similar efforts by the European Union have finally culminated with Putin's decision to forgo the pipeline project entirely' (ibid).

While the US sees the cancellation of South Stream as a victory for European energy security, an analyst working in a leading research and energy consultancy business, when asked about the implications of the cancellation of South Stream, expressed the view that Europe would be the biggest loser (Personal Interview 2). According to the same source, with the Ukrainian crisis being far from resolved, EU member states in Southern and Eastern Europe will remain exposed to concerns over the security of supply (ibid).

The sections on Hungary and Bulgaria show that both countries saw energy partnership with Russia and, more specifically, the development of the South Stream project, as an opportunity to enhance their energy security. While both Hungary and Bulgaria claimed the West-backed Nabucco was the priority project, they held the view that the South Stream pipeline was not a competitor to Nabucco, and that both pipelines should be built to meet future gas demand. The European Commission was also not against the construction of South Stream initially; in fact, it had expressed the view that the pipeline, although not contributing to the diversification of gas supplies in Europe, could still contribute to Europe's energy security.

However, this gradually changed, and the EU began to scrutinize IGAs signed with Russia. Eventually, the European Commission initiated an infringement procedure against Bulgaria on the grounds of incompatibility of its IGA with the Union's TEP and the legality of procurement for the pipeline. However, Bulgaria announced the suspension of the construction of its section of the pipeline only following the visit of the US senators on June 8, 2014. Eventually, on December 1, 2014, Putin announced the cancellation of the project following delays in the construction.

While South Stream was cancelled, another Russian pipeline, Nord Stream I, was successfully launched in 2011. The next section will look into the developments surrounding the construction of this controversial pipeline and will examine how Germany interpreted the external environment and responded to opportunities and threats generated by the systemic pressure. It will also examine the case of Polish opposition to Nord Stream I, thus providing a complete picture of all issues surrounding the development of the pipeline.

7.5 Nord Stream I: Opportunities and Threats for Germany and Poland

In 2005, the German government gave the political go-ahead for the development of the Nord Stream I project with the support of all parties, although with low engagement of the Bundestag. In September of the same year, OAO Gazprom, BASF AG and E.ON AG signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on the construction of the pipeline in the presence of President Putin and Chancellor Schröder. The pipeline deal was sealed with a €1.46 billion German loan guarantee for the project, just a few weeks before Gerhard Schröder lost the 2005 election to Angela Merkel (Kramer, 2009), while only a couple of weeks after leaving office, Schröder took over as Chairman of the board of Nord Stream I.

The project proved controversial, with opponents claiming that the pipeline would increase Europe's reliance on Russia for its energy needs, giving Moscow leverage over Europe. However, supporters of the project argued that Nord Stream would enhance European energy security. In this context, the first section will attempt to explain why Germany, Gazprom's main European partner, saw Nord Stream as an opportunity while Poland, the most vocal opponent of the project, interpreted it as a threat.

7.5.1 Germany: Nord Stream as an opportunity

Both Schröder, and Steinmeier (the Chief of Cabinet at that time, later Minister of Foreign Affairs under Merkel and now President of Germany), repeatedly tried to promote Nord Stream I as a European project that should be supported by all EU member states. However, the construction of Nord Stream I made more sense for Germany than any other European state. Many European countries, such as Poland and the Baltic states, viewed Nord Stream I as a threat to their energy and national security. As a result, Germany's Nord Stream I policy was vehemently opposed by many European countries, and the United States.

The change in Germany's leadership in 2005 was expected to lead to a change in stance towards Nord Stream I because the new German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, appeared less accommodating towards Moscow and had openly criticised Schröder for taking a leading role in the Nord Stream consortium after approving the project as Chancellor (Whist, 2008). However, there was no change in Berlin's attitude towards Nord Stream I. In contrast, during Merkel's first meeting with President Medvedev, she confirmed that she would continue supporting the development of the project. Similarly to Schröder and Steinmeier, Merkel endorsed the view that the pipeline was 'strategically important for the whole of Europe' and not just for Germany (RIA Novosti, 2008).

Merkel's continuation of Schröder's Nord Stream policy can be better understood if one takes into account the changes in Germany's energy sector and the influence of domestic forces (Umbach, 2007).

7.5.2 Nuclear Phase-out

In 2000, after more than a year of negotiation, the industry and the government in Germany reached an agreement on the gradual phasing out of nuclear power use, which aimed to achieve a complete shut-down of all nuclear power plants by 2022. Although critics warned that nuclear phase-out would increase Germany's reliance on Russian gas, the agreement became law in 2002, and two plants were shut down in 2003 and 2005. Policy decisions such as nuclear phase-out have certainly contributed to Germany's support for the Nord Stream I project (Goldthau, 2013), as Nord Stream I would secure the direct flow of 55 bcm of natural gas directly from Russia to Germany.

The shutdown of nuclear power stations was also expected to affect Germany's greenhouse gas emission goals (Whist, 2008). Although the use of renewables could have a positive impact, the phase-out would undoubtedly lead to the increased use of coal and gas, thus preventing Berlin from reaching its targets. The issue of greenhouse gas emissions became a source of conflict between the Social Democrats (SPD), who agreed to put an end to the nuclear power while in coalition government with the Green Party, and the Christian Democrats (CDU/CSU). The latter repeatedly criticized this decision, also raising questions about increased energy dependency on Russia. Whist points out that the Christian Democrats and Social Democrats would disagree on every important energy issue (Whist, 2008, 14).

The problem of dependency on Russia became more evident after the January 2007 Russo-Belarusian energy crisis, during which Gazprom halted oil deliveries through the

Druzhba-pipeline, which runs through Belarus and supplies Germany with twenty per cent of its annual oil imports (Deutsche Welle 2007; Holley, 2007). The dispute was of a commercial character and was related to Russian oil export tariffs to Belarus, and the increased transit fees demanded by Belarus for Russian oil supplies to Western Europe (Woehrel, 2011, 4). In response to this event, Chancellor Merkel warned that Germany must 'think about the consequences of shutting down nuclear power plants' (Whist, 2007, 14). This position was also repeated in June 2008, when Merkel argued that 'the phase-out decision was absolutely wrong' (Whist, 2007, 14). She promised to revoke the agreement if the CDU/CSU won the 2009 Federal elections.

Later in May 2009, prior to the election, the CDU/CSU Parliamentary Group (2009) issued a Decision expressing the view that 'another major shift in the energy mix towards more natural gas is not a sustainable energy supply solution for Germany'. According to the Decision, an industrialised country such as Germany highly dependent on imports, could not rely on a single energy source, and it was 'therefore essential to extend the operating life of Germany's nuclear power stations.' The same document estimated that the shutdown of 17 large power plants which produced (as of 2008) 23 per cent of German electricity would increase the use of gas from 12.6 per cent (2009) to 23 per cent if the phase-out went ahead as planned (CDU/CSU Parliamentary Group, 2009).

Indeed when the party won the elections in 2009, the new CDU/CSU/FDP coalition government extended the operation of nuclear power plants by twelve years on average (Gründinger, 2017). This was seen as necessary in order to secure supplies while transitioning energy production to renewable energy sources (The German Federal Government, 2010). However, the decision to extend nuclear plant life did not lead to a change in Berlin's Nord Stream policy. Merkel accepted and followed Schröder's stance on Nord Stream, despite advocating for a tougher line with Moscow.

The continuation of Schröder's Nord Stream policy can be attributed to internal issues between the CDU/CSU and the SPD over energy partnership with Russia, but most importantly to the fact that the new German government was well aware of the fact that it had to secure more natural gas in order to compensate for the loss of nuclear power.

7.5.3 Germany's pro-Russian Lobby

An equally important factor contributing to the continuation of Berlin's Nord Stream policy, and also explaining Berlin's Russophilia, is Germany's powerful *pro-Russia* business lobby (Van Herpen, 2015).

According to Van Herpen, this lobby is led by some of the biggest German companies and banks (ibid). With a tight web of economic ties between the two countries lasting decades, German companies have demonstrated on numerous occasions that they want to ensure that these ties will not be affected by the cold war atmosphere between the West and Russia (Lucas, 2013). As a result, any attempt by a pro-Atlantic Merkel to take a different political stance towards Nord Stream I would find her coming under strong pressure by the German business lobby, 'that wants good relations with Russia no matter what' (ibid, 189), even if this steers away from German foreign policy.

The leading role in the pro-Russian lobby, according to Feklyunina (2013, 64-65) 'is played by the Ost-Ausschuss der Deutschen Wirtschaft (Eastern Committee of the German Economy), which represents German economic interests in Eastern and Southern Europe, the Baltic States and Central Asia'. Members of the Eastern Committee of the German Economy are large German companies and banks that do business with Russia. According to Klaus Mangold, Chairman of the Committee on Eastern European Economic Relations, Russia presented a huge opportunity for German companies, particularly in the machine-building and

construction sectors (Lucas, 2008). He proved right. By 2014, 6.200 German companies were active in Russia, 300,000 German jobs depended on trade with Russia, and German companies had invested €20 billion in business in Russia (Economist, 2014). Thus, it should not come as a surprise that these companies put pressure on the German government to maintain good relations with Russia. As Lucas (2008, 224) correctly points out, 'it is hard to fault German companies for acting in the interests of their shareholders'.

Furthermore, these companies put significant effort into 'soften[ing] the feeling of threat from the East', often spread by the German mass media (ibid, 65). This is more evident in the energy sector. Moreover, it is exactly what the Chairman of the Executive Board of E.ON Ruhrgas, Burckhard Bergmann, tried to do with his article on energy security. In this article, Bergmann emphasized that Russia is a reliable supplier and argued that the increasing dependence on Russian natural gas poses no threat to the EU. He expressed the view that, on the contrary, energy partnership with Russia will enhance European energy security (Feklyunina, 2013). Bergmann also tried to highlight the importance of maintaining good political ties with all energy suppliers and transit countries, meaning prioritising relations with Russia (ibid).

This comes as no surprise, as E.ON Ruhrgas is one of the two largest shareholders of Nord Stream AG after Gazprom; the other one is Wintershall. Both companies are good examples of this approach. Both had a strong interest in the construction of the pipeline and in maintaining close relations with the political leadership in Moscow (Van Herpen, 2015). For example, in December 2008, the 'CEO of the Wintershall, Reinier Zwitserloot, was awarded the Order of Friendship of the Russian Federation, the highest state decoration that can be awarded to a non-Russian citizen' for his contribution to German-Russian friendship (Van Herpen, 2015, 218). The above clearly demonstrates the important role that these large

companies play in German-Russian relations and, more specifically, in the German-Russian energy partnership.

Overall, the continuation of Merkel's continuation of Nord Stream policy can be attributed to the following two reasons. First, Nord Stream I would secure the direct flow of natural gas from Russia at a time when demand was expected to increase due to nuclear phase-out. Second, it would generate profit for German companies that happen to be the two largest shareholders, after Gazprom, and would help to maintain good relations between Germany and Russia. The need for more gas and the pressure from the business sector 'convinced' Merkel to reaffirm Germany's commitment to Nord Stream I. Merkel even attempted to present the development of the pipeline as a win-win situation, explaining that for Russia, the project means stable demand for gas and for Germany and Europe, it guarantees gas supply security (Gurkov, Ostaptschuk, 2011).

However, despite the obvious benefits for Germany and Europe, the country on numerous occasions has been requested to abandon the project. One reason for this is that Germany's energy interests seem to clash with the United States' interests. Washington was not willing to see Germany falling into the Russian orbit. However, besides Washington's opposition, Central and Eastern European states were also highly critical of the Nord Stream project. In this context, the next section will examine Poland's stance, one of the most vocal opponents of Nord Stream I in Europe.

7.6 Poland's opposition to Nord Stream I

The first stage of Nord Stream I was inaugurated on 8 November 2011. However, the development of the project had not gone ahead as fast as expected (Whist, 2008). To an extent, the reason behind the delays was the opposition it faced by the Central and Eastern European

states that called into question its 'Pan-European status', even though the European Commission and European Parliament had 'endorsed the pipeline as early as in 2000' (Kraner, 2009). Critics of the Nord Stream I had accused Germany of prioritising its interests over other member states (BBC, 2005). Poland has been Nord Stream's loudest critic of all the European nations, with Polish officials being particularly vocal in opposing Nord Stream I.

7.6.1 Poland: 2005 to 2007

In May 2006, Radoslaw Sikorski, the Polish Minister of Defence under the Presidency of Lech Kaczyński, compared Nord Stream I to the 1939 Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, under which Stalin and Hitler secretly agreed to carve up Poland at the start of World War II (Cameron, 2007; Whist, 2008; Adomeit, 2016). The German government reacted by characterising Sikorki's statement as an 'absurd comparison' (Cameron, 2007, 3).

A year later, on May 29, 2007, in a letter sent to the Financial Times, Sikorski, Minister of National Defence, Maciej Olex-Szczytowski, a business adviser specialising in Central Europe and Jacek Rostowski, Professor of Economics, accused Germany of concluding an agreement for the construction of Nord Stream I without prior consultations with European partners, thus accusing Berlin of lack of solidarity (Kramer, 2009). The Polish Minister of Defence, who was known abroad for his tough stance towards Russia, disagreed with EU officials who portrayed the project as one that contributed to the collective energy security in Europe. He described Nord Stream I as 'the most outrageous attempt by Mr Putin to divide and damage the EU', adding that the pipeline 'would be an economic and geopolitical disaster for the EU' (Cameron, 2007, 3). Paradoxically, Sikorski was criticized in Poland for attempts to normalise relations with Moscow.

Polish-German relations that ‘had hit a high point’ over the course of the 1990s ‘quickly crumbled’ after October 2005 (Longhurst, 2008, 2). According to Wiatr (2014), the main reason was the 2005 electoral victory of the Law and Justice party, a right-wing party with a strongly anti-German and nationalistic foreign policy founded in 2001 by the Kaczyński twins, Lech and Jarosław. The agreement for the construction of Nord Stream I also ‘helped fuel the twins Germanophobia’ (Longhurst, 2008, 2).

Lech Kaczyński won the presidential elections later, in October of the same year. Under the leadership of the nationalist Kaczyński, relations between Poland and Russia also ‘hit a post-Cold War low, with the Poles using their veto power in the EU to block discussions of a new agreement between Brussels and Moscow as a response to the Russian ban on Polish food imports (Orban, 2008, Longhurst, 2008). Longhurst characterizes Poland under Kaczyński’s rule as out of kilter with European values, and ‘unable to compromise’ (Longhurst, 2008, 3), and he attributes the Kaczynskis’ Euroscepticism to their passion for the United States and notes that their ‘awkwardness in Europe, contrasted with a slave-like attitude towards America’ (ibid).

7.6.2 Poland: 2007-2014 - Change in leadership but no change in the stance towards Nord Stream

The appointment of Donald Tusk as the Prime Minister of Poland in 2007 certainly brought a change in Polish-German relations. Tusk seemed to be less ‘stubborn and emotional, though no less resolute, when it comes to Russia’ (Longhurst, 2008, 3). His government was credited with building a closer relationship with its European counterparts and, at the same time, although remaining Atlanticist, being less subservient towards the United States (Longhurst, 2008).

In December 2007, Sikorski made a working visit to Berlin, in his capacity as Minister of Foreign Affairs, where he met his German counterpart, Frank-Walter Steinmeier. According to an MFA communiqué (Paszkowski, 2007), the visit was considered a positive signal after two years of cooling of bilateral relations. However, when it came to Nord Stream, Sikorski stated that 'the Polish position remained unchanged' although he suggested that 'it was possible to hold consultations with the German side at the expert level, in a spirit of dialogue' (Paszkowski, 2007). The consultations, according to Sikorski, would allow Poland and Germany 'to become better familiarised with the arguments of the other side' (Paszkowski, 2007).

The idea that Nord Stream I was a politically motivated project continued to prevail in the coming years in Poland. Many Polish MEPs, along with Baltic MEPs, have been highly critical of the project, and their positions were 'set out in vigorous debates and petition papers which had been submitted to the Petition Committee since 2006' (Solovyova, 2015, 46). Although Solovyova notes that none of these MEPs 'were outright opposed to the project itself' and that the Polish and Lithuanians just stated a preference that the pipeline be built 'on-shore through the traditional EU transits', Polish officials' statements show the opposite: Poland was against the construction of the Nord Stream I project (ibid).

For example, Pawel Zalewski, a Polish MEP, argued that the 'whole idea of this pipeline [was] to cut off the Baltic states from NATO and the EU' (Hundley, 2010). A similar statement was made in 2008 by another Polish MEP, Urszula Gacek (European Parliament, 2008e), who characterized Nord Stream I as an 'economically unviable and environmentally questionable' project that only aims to serve Russian foreign policy goals and that if built would 'isolate Poland, the Baltic States and Ukraine'. These statements show that Poland was against the construction of the pipeline, which it saw as a tool that Moscow could use to exert pressure

on Warsaw if it did not comply with the Kremlin's demands. Thus, Poland's efforts to block the construction of the pipeline on the EU level should not come as a surprise.

Various attempts were made to block the pipeline project at the EU level. One of the arguments Polish often made against the pipeline at the EU level was the effect the pipeline could have on the environment. In May 2006, Polish MEP, Krzysztof Mączkowski, filed a complaint arguing that the pipeline project could damage the marine ecosystem along the Polish and Lithuanian coastlines. Having regarded the petition 0952/2006 initiated by Mączkowski and other petitions, the European Parliament voted on a non-binding resolution concerning the environmental threat posed by the Nord Stream pipeline. The resolution was adopted by 542 votes in favour, 60 against, and 38 abstentions (European Parliament, 2008b). In the resolution, the EP called the 'European Commission and the Council to make a full commitment to analysing the environmental impact of the construction of the North European gas pipeline' (European Parliament, 2008).

At the same time, the resolution recognized Nord Stream I not only as a 'project of European interest that would help meet the EU's future energy needs' but also as 'an infrastructure project with a wide political and strategic dimension for both the EU and Russia'. Yet, the EP admitted that the EU lacked the necessary tools to respond to both the environmental and security issues associated with the construction of the pipeline. The document also highlighted that the EP regretted the 'marginal role it played in the project, pointing out that perhaps a 'greater EU involvement would reduce the uncertainty felt by many Member States about the Nord Stream' (European Parliament, 2008, 4).

The Nord Stream consortium welcomed the adoption of the amended version of the resolution (P6_TA (2008) 0336) with corrections of the original text that were approved by MEPs. According to the consortium, the resolution was 'now significantly more measured', and Nord Stream believed that the Environmental Impact Assessment that was being carried

out would satisfy MEPs' requests for further information about the pipeline (Nord Stream, 2008b). The original report initiated by the EP Petitions Committee and drafted by Polish MEP Marcin Libicki, the Chairman of the Petitions Committee, according to Nord Stream AG 'contained several factual inaccuracies' (Nord Stream, 2008b).

Later, in 2009, a press release issued by Nord Stream claimed that the company spent more than €100m on various environmental assessments, with the Environmental Impact Assessment (known as the Espoo report) published in 2009. Romans Banumanis, the Nord Stream Regional Advisor for the Baltic States, stated that having 'thoroughly assessed the impact of the project, Nord Stream is confident that the Espoo Report provides a sound basis for the evaluation of potential transboundary impacts associated with the pipeline' (Banumanis, 2009, 2).

However, for many, Poland and the Baltic States were hiding behind the environmental damage the pipeline could cause. Polish environmental concerns were seen as an excuse for the pipeline not to be built. The reality was that the construction of the pipeline was against Polish national security interests. For Eastern and Central Europeans, the Nord Stream issue evoked memories of Soviet occupation. Thus, as Kramer (2009) correctly notes, the pipeline 'has become a proxy debate over Russia's intentions toward the lands it ruled from the end of World War II to the fall of the Berlin Wall'.

Due to its troubled past with Russia, Poland, similarly to other former Soviet republics and satellite states, sees its dependence, but also that of Europe, on Russian natural gas as a threat to its energy and national security. More specifically, at that time, Warsaw feared that if Nord Stream was built, the Kremlin could stop supplies to Poland at any time, and it could do so without affecting other European clients, such as Germany (Vernon, 2010). Without Germany being affected by disruptions of gas supplies, Warsaw saw Moscow's chances of using gas supplies as a political tool against Central and Eastern European countries as high.

In other words, the Kremlin could use energy as leverage to make Poland do what it otherwise would not. Poland also feared that Germany's increasing dependence and the rest of Europe on Russian gas could lead Europe into the Russian orbit. In such a scenario, there would be little opposition to any pressure from Moscow on former Soviet states and satellite countries or Russian efforts to regain influence over these states. For these reasons, Poland linked its energy security and European energy security to its national security.

Furthermore, Warsaw also feared that Nord Stream's construction could deprive Poland, along with the Baltic States, Hungary, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic, of transit fees (Mankoff, 2011). Besides the loss of revenue Poland collects from allowing Russian gas to cross its territory, Warsaw also feared to lose the counter-leverage it enjoyed over Russia as a transit country (Westphal, 2008). In fact, some authors go as far as to argue that the opposition of Poland and the other states to Nord Stream I is 'not due to prospect of increased Russian leverage' but due to the prospect of losing transit money and the leverage that they enjoy over Russia as transit countries (Ifantis, 2008, 80). However, Polish officials' statements show that Warsaw seemed less concerned about the loss of income and leverage as transit country over Russia than the use of the pipeline as a political tool to exert political pressure on the country.

While Poland struggled to convince Old Europe that Nord Stream constitutes a threat to Polish and European security, it found strong support from the United States. Washington's efforts, in the form of a programme to assist the new Central and Eastern European democracies in reducing reliance on Russian energy resources, began as early as in the 1990s. This programme was important as the energy dependence of these countries was directly linked to their political dependence on Moscow. In fact, the US efforts began long before any initiatives taken by the Europeans. Smith argues that the programme could be considered as one of the most 'successful U.S. assistance efforts directed towards the region' as it 'contributed to a measurable reduction in the growth of energy intensity' considering the level of industrial

development that was taking place (Smith, 2010, 2). To understand the importance of the US programme, one has to look at the per capita energy intensity level of Poland compared to that of Ukraine – which has half the capacity of its neighbour (ibid).

Poland has also been very supportive of US efforts to 'open direct energy routes to Europe from Central Asia' (ibid, 8). These efforts, however, were undermined by the lack of support within the European Commission and major European capitals.

Poland and the US also made joint efforts to raise the issue of energy security within NATO. However, Smith notes that the countries led by Germany, 'have resisted U.S.-Polish initiatives', adding that 'the same group has also prevented an agreement on a common EU security strategy and a unified energy market' (ibid).

When it comes to Nord Stream I, Smith highlights that a 'similar reaction occurred within the European Commission and in Berlin, when Washington raised questions about the potential damage to collective European security by the construction of the Nord Stream gas pipeline' (ibid, 11). More concretely, he suggests that, at that time, concerns 'expressed by U.S. government and nongovernment officials were brushed aside by key officials in the Commission and the German government' (Smith, 2010, 11). It seems that 'Old Europe' at that time was convinced that Nord Stream would contribute to the security of gas supplies.

Conclusion: To what extent has Great Power competition affected the development of a common European energy security policy?

This case study has found that the US-Russia security competition has affected the development of a common European energy security policy between 2004 and 2014. More specifically, the findings suggest that, as the competition between the US and Russia grew, the US took several measures to restrict the export of Russian gas to Europe and reduce the

dependence of its European allies on Russian gas supplies. On the other hand, whether intentionally or not, Russia managed to delay the development of a common European energy security policy. The personal relationship between the Russian and European politicians and the 'special' energy contract awarded to Gazprom's European partners delayed the establishment of a common energy policy in the EU.

Russia

After Putin took office in 2000, he secured a bigger role in the energy sector for the Russian government. The increased exports of Russian energy resources in combination with high prices soon allowed Russia to build up its currency reserves and start repaying its foreign debts. However, as independent Ukraine gained control of the pipeline infrastructure following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia soon started facing transit problems with gas exports. The Kremlin sought to minimize the transit risk by developing new gas export routes, such as the South Stream and Nord Stream I pipeline projects.

Although prior studies have noted that both South Stream and Nord Stream I are purely political projects, this chapter has found that both pipeline project investments are justifiable from the financial perspective. However, evidence shows it would be naïve to accept that since the two projects made sense from the financial point of view, they could not serve Russian political interests. This work concludes that the pipelines are important to Moscow for both economic and political reasons.

In fact, these gas projects were so important to Russia that Putin had been personally involved in the promotion of the projects abroad. The importance of the two pipelines is also evident in the recruitment of high-profile European politicians to South Stream and Nord Stream top posts.

To promote Russian energy interests abroad, Russia mostly relied, and still does, on bilateral energy diplomacy. In other words, Moscow favours bilateral supply agreements and memorandums of understanding with partner and customer countries. These bilateral agreements with individual European member states have long delayed the development of a common European energy policy. This is because the countries that benefited from these agreements, mostly Old Europe, have long resisted the development of a common European approach in external energy relations with Russia, holding the view that bilateral energy agreements serve their interests better.

For example, both in the case of South Stream (even if the pipeline was eventually cancelled) and Nord Stream, the gains for the European partners of Gazprom (lower gas prices, the security of gas supply) outweighed any calls for solidarity with CEE countries and efforts to develop a common European energy policy towards Russia.

More specifically, in the case of South Stream, evidence shows that both Hungary and Bulgaria ignored all calls for solidarity with CEE countries, prioritising their energy and economic interests over the collective European interests.

Similarly, the case of Nord Stream I also demonstrates that Germany refused to give up on the privileges of its ‘special’ partnership with Russia and the advantages of the direct gas pipeline from Russia to Germany, and despite all intra-European opposition, successfully launched the pipeline in November 2011.

Thus, to a great extent, the delay in the development of a common European energy policy can be attributed to the preference of individual member states for bilateral energy agreements with Russia over a common energy approach. Russian leaderships’ relations with high European politicians and ‘special’ contracts convinced Gazprom’s European partners that bilateral agreements, compared to a collective approach, would serve their national interests better.

The US

The realisation that Russian energy exports constitute a threat to US national interests came only in late 2004. All official documents analysed for this chapter show that around this time, policymakers in Washington became aware of the importance of Russian oil and gas exports for the country's economic development, military modernization, and growing influence abroad. This was also when Washington started to become concerned about the threat emanating from the growing dependence of its European allies on Russian natural gas, a reliance that Russia could exploit to advance its interests in the area. US policymakers feared that Moscow could use bilateral agreements with major European powers and their dependence on its energy resources to project its influence on the European continent and weaken trans-Atlantic ties.

The results of this case study also indicate that Russia's energy policy in the post-Soviet space was not congruent with US interests in the region. According to the primary documents used for this study, the perception that prevailed in Washington was that Moscow was using oil and gas to re-establish its influence in the area and prevent former Soviet states from seeking membership in the EU or NATO. In other words, Moscow was using its energy as leverage to counter the growing US influence in the post-Soviet space.

The analyses of primary documents and Washington's reaction to the expansion of Russian gas infrastructure to Europe suggest that restricting Russian gas exports to Europe has been a key priority for the US between 2006 and 2014. The US policymakers have both 'in word and action' encouraged the suspension of Russian pipeline projects in Europe.

For example, in the case of South Stream, Bulgaria announced the suspension of the construction of its section of the pipeline following the US Senators' visit on June 8, 2014. Prior to the visit of the US Senators, the European Commission had initiated an infringement

procedure against Sofia on the grounds of incompatibility of its IGA with the Union's TEP and the legality of procurement for the pipeline. However, all evidence points to the fact that it was the American involvement that convinced the Bulgarian leadership to abandon the project. Eventually, the project was cancelled in December of the same year.

Contrary to the case of South Stream - and this is perhaps one of the most interesting findings of this chapter - when it comes to Nord Stream I, there is no hard evidence pointing at US efforts to halt the construction of the pipeline. Although many US officials questioned Russia's motives behind the development of the pipeline project and many official documents highlighted the threat the Russian pipelines pose to US security, there is no evidence of US initiatives to suspend the project.

Other measures include US officials visits to European capitals to convince the EU members states to diversify their supplies away from Russia. To achieve this, Washington actively encouraged the implementation of energy efficiency measures and supported the construction of pipelines that could bring non-Russian gas to Europe. All these US initiatives aimed to reduce energy dependence on Russian energy resources.

Most importantly, following the 2006 and especially 2009 Russia-Ukraine gas disputes, the US put significant effort into developing a common transatlantic approach towards Russia. A transatlantic approach, however, preconditioned a common European approach. For example, in coordination with Poland, the US attempted to raise the issue of European energy security within NATO; however, countries led by Berlin resisted the US-Polish initiatives.

Taking advantage of political momentum in 2009, Washington came with another proposal, the EU-US Energy Council. The EU-US Energy Council aims to foster strategic cooperation on energy and energy security between the EU and the US. This transatlantic platform allows Washington and Brussels to exchange information and coordinate with the EU on energy-related matters. But perhaps most importantly, it allows Washington to

actively promote its vision of European energy security at the EU level. Although it is difficult to measure how much influence Washington had via the EU-US Energy Council over the energy policy-making cycle in the EU between 2010 and 2014, it is essential to mention that many of the measures adopted later at the EU level have been long supported by the US.

To summarize, the evidence from this study suggests that as the competition between Russia and the US grew, the impact on the development of European energy policy also grew. On the one hand, Russia's special energy deals with major European states delayed the development of the common energy policy in the EU. On the other hand, US efforts to present EU member states' dependence on Russian gas as a threat to their energy and national security and support for speaking with one voice against Russia has accelerated the creating on common European energy security policy.

The application of the Two-Level Neoclassical Model to the case study

The application of the Two-Level Neoclassical Realist Model to this case study has advanced our knowledge of the phenomenon under investigation. This approach allowed for a more detailed examination of each of the two different levels of analysis, Great Power Level and Intra European Level, thus offering a better understanding of how one affects the other. More specifically, at the Great Power Level (Level 1), it allowed studying how the US policymakers' interpretation of Russian energy exports as a source of Russian power has changed over the years, explaining how and why the competition with Russia over the European energy sector between 2004 and 2014 gradually intensified.

At the Intra-European Level, this approach has allowed the examination of European leaders' interpretation of the external environment shaped by the Great-Power competition. The incorporation of intervening variables such as leaders' images in the analysis but also that of the strategic culture allowed explaining why different EU member states, such as Germany,

Hungary and Bulgaria, have responded in different ways to the systemic pressure generated by the Great Power competition.

Furthermore, using a neoclassical realist-based approach has allowed the bringing out of other internal factors that have impacted the development of a common European energy security policy besides the external pressure. This would be impossible without the incorporation of intervening variables into the analysis.

Overall, it can be argued that this theoretical approach brings out aspects that other theoretical approaches do not, thus allowing for a more nuanced explanation of the phenomenon under investigation.

Chapter Eight – The Case of Nord Stream II

The previous chapter discussed the key issues surrounding the impact of US-Russian security competition on the construction of the South Stream and Nord Stream I pipeline projects and the development of the common European energy security policy between 2004 and 2014. This chapter will examine the impact of US-Russian security competition on the common energy security policy in the EU between 2014 and 2019 (inclusive) and the construction of the Nord Stream II pipeline. It will conclude that although US-Russian security competition has affected the development of the European energy security policy, other important factors, such as the tense relations between Russia and the Central and Eastern European states, contributed to the creation of the Energy Union.

This chapter is divided into two parts. Part I of this chapter begins with a discussion on Nord Stream II and looks into the project details of the pipeline. It also explores the Kremlin's commercial and political motives behind the construction of the pipeline. The second section of part I then examines how the US interprets the plans for the construction of Nord Stream II and reacts to the expansion of Russian gas infrastructure to Europe. Part II of this chapter then discusses the intra-European level. The aim here is to investigate how US and Russian pressure and incentives have affected the development of a common European energy security policy. To achieve this, part III of the chapter looks into how Germany and Poland have interpreted the development of Nord Stream II and responded to the opportunities and threat generated from the wider Great Power competition. Finally, the findings of this chapter will be used to determine to what extent Great Power competition has affected the development of a common European energy security policy.

8.1 The literature on Nord Stream II

The Nord Stream II pipeline has become one of the most controversial issues in the EU energy-related debates (Fisher, 2017; Loskot-Strachota, 2016). On the one hand, Russia and the supporters of the project, northwest European energy champions backed by governments in Germany, France, and Austria, assert that the project is purely commercial and will make a positive contribution to European energy security. On the other hand, the opponents of the pipeline, most Central and Eastern European countries supported by the United States, hold that Nord Stream II is primarily a political project that aims to divide Europe, increase its dependence on Russia and drive a wedge between the EU and the US (Korteweg, 2018; Radvanovsky, 2019; Pancevski, 2019). Overall, Nord Stream II has been labelled a 'killer project', one that would kill much of what the Energy Union was intended to create.

Nord Stream II is planned to run alongside Nord Stream I, thus doubling the volume of gas transferred from Russia to Germany via the Baltic Sea to 110 bcm. However, some authors argued that there are too many obstacles for the pipeline to be built.

More specifically, Riley (2015) suggests that the delivery of Nord Stream II looks much more difficult than that of its twin pipeline, Nord Stream I. He explains that while several factors make the project more challenging to deliver, the two main ones are the financing of the pipeline and the legal obstacles that the project faces. More specifically, Riley suggests that from a financial perspective, Gazprom is in a much weaker position than it was at the time of the construction of the Nord Stream I pipeline, as the sanctions imposed on Russia by the United States and the European Union, following the annexation of Crimea in 2014, are likely to impact the willingness of financial institutions to support the project. When it comes to legal obstacles, Riley (2015) points out that the construction of Nord Stream II is taking place in a different legal environment than that of Nord Stream I. While Nord Stream I was built before

the Third Energy Package came into force, in the case of Nord Stream II, the application of EU law creates impediments for the realisation of the project on Gazprom's terms and weakens the company's control over the pipeline system (ibid).

Goldthau (2016) also finds that the new pipeline project operates in a significantly different political environment than its twin pipeline system, Nord Stream I. Although the latter faced similar criticism and opposition, the author notes that it is important to remember that it 'was planned during a time when Russia was by and large still seen as a partner, geopolitical tensions over Ukraine were at relatively low levels, and – probably most important – the liberal EU energy paradigm was only in the making' (Goldthau, 2016, 10).

Dudek and Piebalgs (2017) also suggest that political obstacles will make the realisation of the new project much more difficult. The authors highlight that at least one-third of EU member states have expressed their opposition to Nord Stream II (Dudek and Piebalgs, 2017). They present three reasons for this opposition. First, the pipeline system contradicts the principles of the Energy Union as it undermines Europe's long-term efforts to diversify suppliers and routes. Second, some EU member states (New Europe) see Russia as a security threat, especially following the military intervention in Ukraine. Finally, the construction of the pipeline would weaken Ukraine's status as a transit country and could deprive Kyiv of transit fees (Dudek and Piebalgs, 2017).

Overall, the majority of publications on Nord Stream II focus on exploring the controversy and policy dilemmas surrounding the new gas pipeline or discussing Nord Stream II in the context of EU-Russian relations. Little academic attention is given to the United States' role and interests and, most importantly, to the impact that US-Russian security competition has on the realisation of the pipeline project and the development of a common European energy security policy between 2014-2019. This chapter aims to fill this gap.

The next section will study the Russian energy strategy between 2014 and 2019 and examine how the US interprets and reacts to Russian energy policy in Europe. In order to explain how Washington and Moscow translate the signals in the external environment into specific policy decisions, our analysis will focus on two intervening variables that condition how states respond to systemic pressure. These are the leaders' images and the strategic culture.

8.2 Level 1: Great Power Level

Russia: Nord Stream II - Project details

On September 4, 2015, Gazprom and its five partners signed a Shareholders' Agreement on the implementation of the Nord Stream II pipeline project. A new Swiss-incorporated company, the New European Pipeline AG, would undertake the development of the project. According to the Agreement, Gazprom (Russia) would hold a 51 per cent share in the company, Uniper (Germany), Wintershall (Germany), Royal Dutch Shell (UK), and OMV (Austria) would own ten per cent each and Engie (France) would own nine per cent (Nord Stream 2 AG, 2016). However, after the Polish UOKiK (competition authority) objected to the joint venture in August 2016, stating that it would negatively affect the Polish gas market, the companies backed off the joint venture plan, and Gazprom became the sole owner of Nord Stream II AG. However, the companies came with a new arrangement under which Nord Stream II AG (now wholly owned by Gazprom) signed financing agreements with Uniper, Wintershall, Royal Dutch Shell and OMV, making these five energy giants financial investors. Each of these companies would fund up to €950 million, representing in total about half of the construction cost, estimated at around €9.5 billion or $11 billion (Nord Stream 2, 2018).

Figure 8 Nord Stream II pipeline project

Source: Andrey Pertsev - https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=83618258

The pipeline was designed to transport 55 bcm in two lines of 27.5 bcm capacity each, directly from the world's largest gas reserves in Russia (Bovanenkovo natural gas field in North Russia's Yamal Peninsula, 47 tcb) to Germany (Nord Stream 2 AG, 2017). According to the Project Information Document (PID) published in 2013, the purpose of this new pipeline is to ensure reliable natural gas supplies to the EU, in view of the fact that the demand for natural gas in Europe will increase and alternative internal and external sources and transportation links are either insufficient or too uncertain (Nord Stream AG, 2013, 13).

More specifically, when referring to internal gas suppliers, the document highlighted that although gas production in Norway has grown rapidly in the last decade, the reserves are expected to start to decline from the 2020s (Nord Stream AG, 2013). When it comes to external supplies, the PID suggested that while LNG deliveries to Europe are expected to almost double

by 2030, a further increase is unlikely due to competition in the global market (Nord Stream AG, 2013).

The document also referred to unconventional gas extraction in Europe and stressed that environmental concerns in addition to low levels of 'political and public acceptance and the uncertain economic viability make unconventional gas an uncertain option to cover future EU gas demand' (Nord Stream AG, 2013,14). At the same time, large volume deliveries from the Caspian Sea to Europe, according to the PID are becoming less likely, while gas exports from Central Asian countries to China are much more possible due to close geographic proximity and Chinese investments in the development of the infrastructures (Nord Stream AG, 2013).

8.2.1 Economic and Commercial rationale

Many Western officials such as the US acting ambassador to Germany, Robin Quinville, Prime Minister of Poland Beata Szydło, Prime Minister of Latvia, Maris Kučinskis, Prime Minister of Lithuania, Saulius Skvernelis have argued that Nord Stream II is a political project with no economic or commercial rationale (The Moscow Times, 2020; The Lithuania Tribune, 2017).

Most specifically, the West asserts that Russia's motives behind the construction of the pipeline are to weaken Ukraine by depriving it of transit income and using gas exports as a political tool in order to increase its influence over Kyiv. Although one cannot deny that the pipeline project can be used as a political tool, this does not mean that the project makes no sense from a financial or commercial point of view.

The main reason behind the construction of Nord Stream II is Moscow's efforts to minimise the transit risks associated with the delivery of gas supplies to Europe via Ukraine. Following the 2014 Russia-Ukraine crisis, Moscow made it clear that it would seek alternative

routes to deliver gas to Europe, minimising or avoiding the delivery of gas through the Ukrainian pipeline system (Lang and Westphal, 2017). Russia's efforts to eliminate the transit risk related to gas exports to Europe via Ukraine had begun long before the 2014 crisis. Moscow had made the decision to limit Ukraine's role in its gas exports following the 2006 gas crisis. This is evident in the Russia's Energy Strategy for the period up to 2020 (ES-2020) and for the period up to 2030 (ES-2030). Both ES-2020 and ES-2030 refer to the construction of new gas pipeline systems as part of Moscow's export route diversification policy and effort to minimise transit risks. Nord Stream II, similarly, to Nord Stream I, was built to serve this purpose.

Gas supply disruption in the past due to crises in Ukraine-Russia relations cost Gazprom billions of dollars in revenues and undermined Russia's reputation as a reliable gas supplier. Nord Stream II will allow Gazprom to supply Germany directly, thus reducing the transit risk and minimising the chances of supply disruption and loss of revenues.

However, even if the relations between the two countries improved, the risks associated with the Ukrainian pipeline system would not disappear. Goldthau (2016) notes that the Ukrainian pipeline system has not been modernised or repaired for decades which has affected its capacity, limiting it to an estimated 90 bcma. By building Nord Stream II, Russia will be able to reduce risk related to an ageing pipeline and technical failures and fulfil its long-term supply contracts with European customers.

Furthermore, according to Tichý (2018), by eliminating the transit countries from the equation, Gazprom can maximise its profits. For example, according to the new five-year deal between Gazprom and Naftogaz, Russia will pay Ukraine a total of $7.2 billion for the transfer of 225 bcm of Russian gas. This is about 2 per cent above what Gazprom paid for the 2009-2019 transit contract (Pirani and Sharples, 2020, p 4). Transporting gas via Nord Stream II instead of the Ukrainian pipeline system is cheaper, according to Gazprom's CEO Alexei

Miller. At the St Petersburg Economic Forum in June 2016, Miller estimated the fee for the Ukrainian transit to be about 20 per cent higher than that of Nord Stream II (Goldthau, 2016).

Overall, the economic and commercial rationale of the pipeline is to create capacities that will allow the fulfilment of contracts with European customers, avoid dependencies on transit states that could result in loss of income from disruption of supplies, undermine the reputation of Gazprom as a reliable energy supplier, and reduce transportation cost. However, besides the economic motives, the construction of Nord Stream II and, in general, the boost of energy exports is also dictated by political and security motives.

8.2.2 Political Motives

It would be naïve to assume that Moscow has no political motives behind Nord Stream II construction when Russia's Energy Strategy for the period up to 2030 provides that energy can be used as a political tool.

The construction of Nord Stream II will strengthen Gazprom's role in the European gas market and allow Russia to flexibly handle the gas transfer to Europe through different export routes. Similar to Nord Stream I, Nord Stream II would enable Moscow to cut off supplies to Eastern Europe without affecting the supplies of its major European clients, such as Germany (Goldthau, 2016; Natural Gas Europe, 2016; Loskot-Strachota, 2015, Riley, 2015). The delivery of Russian gas via alternative routes to bypass transit states could deprive these countries of an important income source on top of the leverage they enjoyed over Moscow as transit states. The threat of this alone could force transit countries to make painful concessions to Russia. For this reason, Poland and the Baltic states see the project as a threat not only to the security of Ukraine but also to that of Europe.

The project is also fiercely opposed by the United States, as Washington interprets the pipeline as a 'tool' that will further increase Russian energy influence over Europe and the country's income in hard currency, encouraging a more aggressive Russian foreign policy. The next section will discuss the responses of US Foreign Policy Executives to Russia's plans to expand its pipeline system and increase its gas exports to Europe.

8.3 The US Perspective on Russian energy policy (2014-2019)

8.3.1 The Obama Administration (2013-2017)

Since Gazprom officially launched plans for the construction of Nord Stream II, US officials have vehemently opposed the project. This opposition stemmed from the fear that Nord Stream II would maintain Europe's significant energy dependence on Russian natural gas, a dependence that creates economic and political vulnerabilities for European member states. Additionally, as official documents demonstrate, the Obama US Administration has maintained that the increased income from energy exports would encourage Russia's assertiveness and improve its confidence in international affairs, thus threatening vital US interests. As the next section shows, the empirical findings are consistent with the Two-Level Neoclassical Realist Model predictions, which suggests that the US FPE interpreted Russia's increasing influence and power as a threat.

For example, Joe Biden, during a visit to Stockholm in 2016, in the role of Vice President stated that the Nord Stream II pipeline is a 'fundamentally bad deal for Europe' adding that 'no country should be able to use energy to coerce policies or actions from other nations' (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, 2016). Amos Hochstein, the US State Department special envoy for international energy affairs, characterised the project as one that 'will serve the Russian narrative completely from all aspects' and argued that it also 'creates just the chasm

[the Russians] want in the middle of Europe' (Gurzu and Schatz, 2016). Other Obama Administration officials also expressed the view that Russia had geopolitical motives for constructing Nord Stream II.

Concerns about the dependence of US European allies on Russian energy resources can be found in US government documents such as the US National Security Strategy 2015 (NSS-2015) and National Security Strategy 2017 (NSS-2017). In the US NSS-2015, there is a whole section focused on the importance of strengthening the EU-US alliance, amid concerns that, following the Ukrainian crisis, European security cannot be taken for granted. This strategic document makes it clear that Europe's energy security is of paramount importance to the United States and that Washington will be 'working with Europe to improve its energy security in both the short and long term' (US National Security Strategy 2015, 25). Although the strategy does not provide detailed insights into Washington's plans, it can be assumed that the Ukrainian crisis in 2014 further intensified Washington's efforts to lower European dependence on Russian natural gas.

Similarly, Washington's concern about the European dependence on Russian energy sources is also evident in the US NSS-2017. The document makes it clear that the US's priority, at this time, is to diversify European energy sources to ensure the energy security of the EU member states.

From the analysis of the NSS-2015 and NSS-2017, Washington's efforts to reduce the European energy dependence on Russian energy resources can be attributed to concerns over European security, which the US seems to link to European energy security. The documents list no other reasons to explain the US commitment to the diversification of European gas supplies away from Russia.

However, the International Security Advisory Board (ISAB) Report, conducted by national security experts with military, political and diplomatic backgrounds, and titled *Studies*

on Energy Geopolitics – Challenges and Opportunities, sheds more light on the US concerns about Europe's energy reliance on Russian gas. The report makes it clear that the 'diversification of European energy sources and supply routes is a longstanding priority of U.S. energy diplomacy' that had preceded the 2013 Russia-Ukraine crisis (US State Department, 2014, 12). Although the report does not specify for how long exactly the diversification of European energy resources and supply routes have been a priority for Washington, the US efforts, as chapter five demonstrated, can be traced back to the Cold War era. The ISAB report also reveals more about the reasons behind the US concerns than the NSS-2015 and NSS-2017 documents do. More specifically, the analysis of the report shows that Europe's energy security is not Washington's only concern, as was concluded from the examination of the NSS-2015 and NSS-2017. The report shows that Washington is more concerned about the threat emanating from the huge revenues that the Russian energy exports generate. More specifically, the ISAB report posits that there is a link between energy exports and Russia's foreign policy behaviour and asserts that 'Russia acts more aggressively abroad when its budget is flush with resource revenues' (US State Department, 2014, 13).

From the analysis of the statements of US officials and the NSS-2015, NSS-2017 and the ISAB report, it can be concluded that, between 2014 and 2017, Washington interpreted the Russian effort to increase gas exports to Europe as a threat. This is because US policymakers saw Russian energy sources as a major source of Moscow's power.

The following section will demonstrate that, as the relations between the US and Russia deteriorated, Washington opposed more fiercely the construction of the Nord Stream II pipeline and adopted more drastic measures to limit the Russian gas exports to Europe. Although the US efforts never really stopped, the intensity of these efforts depended on how tense US-Russian relations were.

8.3.2 Trump Administration (2017-2019)

Despite Donald Trump's desire for warmer relations with Moscow during his presidency, not only did relations with Russian worsen, but Washington also more openly opposed the expansion of the Russian gas infrastructures to Europe.

Trump, who was under continuous pressure from US lawmakers not to ease the sanctions imposed on Russia following the annexation of Crimea in 2014, on August 2, 2017, signed into law the bipartisan Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) which, among other things imposed new sanctions on Russia (US Senate, 2017). The measure intended to punish the Kremlin for annexing Crimea, interfering in the US elections, and supporting the Assad regime in Syria (Gotev, 2017).

According to the Financial Times, the most prominent target of CAATSA was the Nord Stream II pipeline (Financial Times, 2017). More specifically, Section 232 of the Act provides that the President, in coordination with US allies, may impose sanctions on parties that make investments that 'directly and significantly' contribute to 'the enhancement of the ability of the Russian Federation to construct energy export pipelines'. The President can also impose sanctions on a person that 'knowingly on or after the date of enactment' of CAATSA provides goods or services 'that could directly and significantly facilitate the maintenance or expansion of the construction, modernisation, or repair of energy pipelines by the Russian Federation' (US Senate, 2017).

According to Fishman, this section is 'an optional tool' that could help Washington impede the construction of Nord Stream II (Fishman, 2017). If the White House decided to use these measures, the sanctions could scare Nord Stream II project partners off, and they might decide that 'it is too risky to proceed with the project' (ibid). This move not only would 'scupper Russia's efforts to deliver gas to Europe while bypassing Ukraine' but it would also

‘help the EU to diversify away from Russian energy’ (ibid). It could also boost the US LNG exports to Europe (ibid).

The new legislation was the first major foreign policy legislation approved by Congress after Trump took office in January 2017. President Trump, who wanted warmer relations with Russia, had opposed the Act as it worked its way through Congress (Zengerle, 2018). However, he had little choice about signing the Bill, as ‘the bill had enough support in Congress to override a presidential veto’ (Euractiv, 2017).

Here, it is important to mention that until CAATSA was signed into law, Ukraine related sanctions were mainly based on four executive orders introduced by President Obama in 2014. While Washington has imposed most Ukraine-related sanctions on Russia in coordination with Brussels, the 2017 efforts to tighten sanctions on Moscow sparked the stormy reaction of some EU member states (Welt et al., 2019). The fiercest reaction came from Germany and Austria, which characterised the sanctions as an intervention into European affairs (Reuters, 2019a).

However, shortly after CAATSA’s enactment, on October 31, 2017, the US State Department issued public guidance on Section 232 of the Act. According to the public guidance, Section 232 would not apply on any projects initiated before August 2, 2017, thus effectively excluding Nord Stream II from the sanctions (US State Department, 2017).

However, a year later, on December 11, 2018, the US House of Representatives passed a symbolic bipartisan resolution to stop Nord Stream II. The resolution found that Nord Stream II was a ‘drastic step backwards for European energy security and United States interests’ and ‘call[ed] upon European governments to reject the Nord Stream II project’ (US House of Representatives, 2018). The measure also urged President Trump to use all available tools to ‘support European energy security through a policy of reducing reliance on the Russia

Federation'. With this resolution, the House of Representatives expressed its support with regard to the imposition of sanctions on Nord Stream II, as Section 232 of CAATSA provided.

Despite the pressure, Trump did not impose sanctions on Nord Stream until December 2019. However, as the next section will demonstrate, the President was against the construction of the pipeline for several different reasons.

Trump opposes Nord Stream II

Although the Trump Administration had long resisted the imposition of sanctions on Nord Stream II, there is no doubt that President Trump himself opposed the pipeline project. This became clearly evident when in July 2018, at a NATO Summit in Brussels, Trump verbally attacked Berlin for supporting the construction of the pipeline.

More specifically, during a breakfast event with NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg, at the US Embassy in Brussels ahead of a NATO Summit, President Trump expressed his dissatisfaction over Germany's pipeline deal with Russia. More concretely, Trump stated that while the US was expected to protect Germany and other European countries from Russia, these countries 'go out and make a pipeline deal with Russia where they [are] paying billions of dollars into the coffers of Russia' (Mason, 2018). Although concerns over increased income from Russian energy exports have been previously expressed in the US government's official documents and perhaps have also been raised by other US Presidents behind closed doors, this was the first time in the post-Cold War era US president had expressed these views openly.

At the same event, Trump also expressed his dissatisfaction about the level of dependence of Germany on Russian energy resources and characterised the country as 'a captive of Russia' (Gotev, 2018). He criticised Berlin for phasing out nuclear power and coal

and importing ‘so much of their oil and gas from Russia’, adding that this ‘is very inappropriate’ and ‘is something that NATO has to look at’ (Mason, 2018).

Although some authors claim that raising the issue of Nord Stream II ahead of the NATO Summit was essentially a negotiation strategy that aimed to convince European NATO members to increase their defence spending (Kajmowicz, 2018), this is not the first time that the US President had demanded that Berlin drop the pipeline project. In May of the same year (2018), Trump set the cancellation of Nord Stream II as one of the conditions for lower tariffs on steel and aluminium in a trade deal negotiated with Europe (Gotev, 2018). While Trump’s statements demonstrated that he strongly opposed the construction of the Nord Stream II pipeline project, it remains unclear why the US President did not use all the tools available to him, such as sanctions, to stop the construction of the pipeline.

Rogin suggests that President Trump resisted the implementation of sanctions because one of his cabinet members, the Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, advised him not to use them, even though his National Security Council recommended him to do so (Rogin, 2019). According to Rogin, several Congressional aides stated that the Treasury Secretary opposed sanctions because ‘some US oil and gas companies, their Wall Street backers and the governments of Germany and Denmark, all oppose the action’ (Rogin, 2019). Later, at a hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Ted Cruz, a Republican Senator, also referred to the efforts of the Treasury Department to resist implementing the sanctions (Senator Ted Cruz, 2019).

US pressure on German Companies

Other US initiatives to stop the construction of the Nord Stream II pipeline include warnings issued by the US Ambassador to Germany, Richard A. Grenell, to German companies involved with Nord Stream II. More specifically, in January 2019, Grenell wrote to the German

companies BASF and Uniper, threatening them with sanctions for participating in the construction of the Nord Stream II pipeline project. According to Euronews, the letters warned that 'companies involved in Russian energy exports are taking part in something that could prompt a significant risk of sanctions' (Euronews, 2019). Later, Grenell's spokesman advised that while the letters should not be considered a threat, they are a 'clear message of US policy' (Handelsblatt, 2019).

Although these letters did not change Germany's position on Nord Stream II, later the same year, the US announced sanctions that significantly delayed the completion of the pipeline project.

Protecting Europe's Energy Security Act

In June 2019, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee passed the bipartisan bill, S. 1441, the 'Protecting Europe's Energy Security Act of 2019', by a vote of 20-2. The Bill reflected the concerns of US lawmakers over Russian energy influence in Europe and aimed at establishing sanctions 'related to the provision of vessels for the construction of Russian energy export pipelines' such as Nord Stream II.

According to Ted Cruz, one of the sponsors of the Bill, Nord Stream II 'pose[d] a grave threat to the national security of the United States' and the US European allies (Cruz, 2019). The Senator expressed the view that The Protecting Europe's Energy Security Act would 'counter Russia's expansionism by targeting the vessels involved in the pipeline's construction', adding that the 'United States must support its European allies with energy diversification' and 'combat Russia's economic blackmail' (Cruz, 2019).

However, although the Bill was sent to the Senate for consideration on July 31, 2019, it was never brought to the Senate floor due to 'bureaucratic intransigence' (Senator Ted Cruz, 2019). Cruz put the responsibility on the Treasury Department, noting that it pushed back

‘against exercising clear statutory authorisation to stop the construction of Nord Stream II pipeline’ (Senator Ted Cruz, 2019).

Following the delays, on December 9, 2019, the content of the Bill was included in the National Defence Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2020, an omnibus spending bill with bipartisan support, and Senator Cruz, who led the fight in the Senate to suspend the construction of Nord Stream II, appeared confident that the US Congress would pass the Bill (Senator Ted Cruz, 2019).

However, Cruz acknowledged that, in reality, Washington does not need to pass the new legislation to stop the construction of Nord Stream II. The Administration, according to the Senator, already had full authority under CAATSA to impose targeted sanctions on the only vessels in the world that are laying pipelines, which would stop Nord Stream II immediately (ibid). So the question for him was, why did the Trump Administration not use the available tools to stop the construction of the pipeline.

The answer to this question was given by David Hale, the Undersecretary for Political Affairs, when Cruz, during a hearing on the future of the US policy toward Russia (ibid). Hale explained that the Administration had not exercised its statutory authority because it was relying on diplomatic tools to stop the pipeline, mainly a range of leadership engagements. Hale’s answer once again confirm that Washington continued to employed the policy of sending high-level US officials to European capitals to discuss European energy security issues and convince the Europeans to diversify their supplies away from Russia

However, his explanation did not satisfy Cruz, who responded by saying that the US strategy of using diplomatic tools was ‘a strategy to do nothing’ (ibid). He added that, unless the Administration decided to exercise its statutory authority, the current US strategy would ‘result with 100 percent certainty in the pipeline being completed and Putin getting billions of

dollars and Europe being made energy dependent more so on Russia and in weakening the United States' position in the world' (ibid).

Cruz's view on Nord Stream II shows that the EU's energy security is not Washington's only concern. The Senator views the pipeline as a source of power for Russia that could undermine the US's position on the international scene. His statement shows that the old days of zero-sum thinking are back. What benefits Russia and makes it stronger, threatens the US and makes it weaker. Since Nord Stream is good for Russia – as per Cruz's statement, it constitutes a significant source of income, increases the dependence of EU member states on Russia, thus increasing Russia's influence over Central and Eastern Europe – then it is automatically bad for the US. This once again confirms that Washington views Russian energy resources, and in particular gas, as a threat to its vital national security interests.

In any case, on December 20, 2019, Trump signed into law the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 2020, which incorporated the Protecting Europe's Energy Security Act, thus sending a clear message of how Washington views Nord Stream II. In anticipation of Trump signing the NDAA, the Swiss-Dutch Allseas pipe-laying company for the Nord Stream II pipeline announced the suspension of its pipe-laying activities (Allseas, 2019). Although the imposition of sanctions was expected to delay the project significantly, it was also expected that Russia would be able to complete the project by itself as 90 per cent of the pipeline was already built (Deutsche Welle, 2019). The project was completed on September 10, 2021 (Gazprom, 2021).

In Europe, the level of approval of the 2020 NDAA varied across the member states. Whilst Germany condemned the legislation as meddling in its domestic affairs, the US ambassador to Berlin, Richard Grenell, noted that European diplomats had thanked him for codifying the sanctions into law (Chazan, 2019). However, the sanctions also angered EU officials. On December 21, a spokesperson for the bloc told the AFP news agency that as a

‘matter of principle, the EU opposes the imposition of sanctions against EU companies conducting legitimate business’ (BBC, 2019).

Despite the disagreements between the US and individual EU member states, as the next section will demonstrate, the energy dialogue between the EU and the US continued in the form of the EU-US Energy Council.

The EU-US Energy Council

Since its establishment in 2009, the EU-US Energy Council has proved to be an important platform for transatlantic dialogue on energy. As discussed in Chapter Six, by 2015, the Council met six times with meetings chaired by high US or EU officials. The seventh EU-US Energy Council, which focused on bolstering energy security and combatting energy vulnerabilities, took place in May 2016 in Washington. The Council was chaired by the US Secretary of State John Kerry, US Secretary of Energy Ernest Moniz, EU HR/VP Federica Mogherini, European Commission Vice President Maroš Šefčovič and European Commissioner Miguel Arias Cañete. Sharon Dijksma, Minister for the Environment of the Netherlands, represented the Presidency of the Council of the European Union (European Commission, 2016c).

In their joint statement, similarly to previous years, the Council emphasised the unacceptability of using energy as a political tool and highlighted their commitment to improving energy diversification in Europe (EU Commission, 2016c). According to the same press release, the access to new suppliers and supplies, including LNG, greater level of interconnection, an increase in domestic energy production, third-party access to gas transmission and storage facilities, and energy efficiency measures, were key to meeting the EU’s energy security goals (European Commission, 2016c).

Similarly, the eighth EU-US Energy Council that took place in Brussels in 2018 focused on energy security issues, including diversification of energy sources, suppliers and routes. This was the first meeting of the Council during the Trump Administration. The meeting was chaired by HR/VP, Federica Mogherini, the Commission's Vice President in charge of the Energy Union, Maroš Šefčovič, Commissioner for Climate Action and Energy, Miguel Arias Cañete, US Secretary of State, Michael Pompeo, and US Secretary of Energy, Rick Perry. Juliane Bogner-Strauß, Federal Minister, represented the Presidency of the Council of the European Union (European Commission, 2018).

From the press releases issued following the EU-US Energy Council meeting, it is evident that an emphasis was placed on the need to diversify supplies, suppliers and routes, in an effort to reduce the dependence of EU member states on Russian energy sources. LNG was presented as a viable alternative to Russian gas.

In fact, in May 2, 2019, the US Department of Energy, the US Commercial Service and the European Commission held the first EU-US Energy Council High-Level Business to Business Energy Forum, to bring together the US and European decision-makers from the governments and companies engaged in the LNG sector (US Mission to the European Union, 2019). The aim of the forum was to encourage business contacts and promote the competitively priced US LNG in the EU.

The US efforts to promote LNG in Europe have triggered a good deal of discussion about whether Washington's efforts to decrease the dependence of European States on Russia should be attributed to actual concerns about EU's energy security or form part of the US strategy to boost exports of US LNG in Europe. While the evidence presented and discussed in earlier chapters demonstrate that such efforts are related primarily to US national security interests, it is important to highlight once again that this does not mean that commercial

interests have not played their role. In fact, these might have further strengthened US support for the diversification of supplies and routes in Europe.

Overall, the evidence shows that as the US and Russia relations further deteriorated between 2014 and 2019 and the competition intensified (Chapter Four), the US efforts to undermine Russian gas exports also intensified. The analysis of US government documents and US official speeches confirmed that Washington's opposition to the expansion of Russian energy infrastructure to Europe stems from the fear that Russian pipelines would maintain or even increase Europe's dependence on Russian natural gas, which Russia could exploit to advance its interests in the region. Evidence also suggests that US officials were concerned that the huge income from energy exports could encourage Moscow's assertiveness. These findings point to the fact that the US continued to see Russian energy exports as the major source of Russian power.

In order to reduce the dependence of their European allies on Russian gas and to limit Moscow's income from gas exports, Washington has adopted several measures. These include leadership engagements and the imposition of sanctions in order to stop the construction of the Nord Stream II pipeline.

These findings are entirely consistent with the predictions of the Two-Level Neoclassical Realist Model that the increase in Russia's relative power will be interpreted as a threat by the US FPE and that Washington will adopt measures to limit the growing power and influence.

After investigating how the US and Russian interests clash over Nord Stream II, the next section will examine to what degree the developments in the European energy (gas) sector are a response to external pressure and incentives in addition to being internally generated.

8.4 Level 2: Intra-EU views on Nord Stream II

The previous section has demonstrated that the US interpretation of Russian energy exports as a source of Russian power has intensified US-Russia competition over the European energy sector between 2015 and 2019. It has also discussed the measures that the two countries have adopted to promote and protect their interests inside and outside of Europe. This section will discuss how European states interpreted the external environment shaped by US-Russian competition and translated opportunities and threats into energy policy decisions.

To better understand how states translate systemic incentives and threats into policy decisions, the next section will focus on two intervening variables that condition how states respond to systemic pressure. These are the leaders' images and the strategic culture.

8.5 Germany: Prioritising national energy interests over collective interests

Since 2011, when Nord Stream was launched, there have been significant changes in the international political scene. The annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation in 2014 and Moscow's support of separatism in Eastern Ukraine led to the deterioration in the Russia-West relations and resulted in the imposition of economic sanctions on Russia by the US and EU. Then, the Syrian crisis in 2016, the alleged Russian meddling in the 2016 US Presidential elections marked a new low point in the Russia-West relations.

For this reason, Germany's approach to Nord Stream II was expected to be different from that to Nord Stream I. In particular, following the crisis in Russia-Ukraine relations, one would expect that Germany would drop its plans for implementing the project. This, however, has not been the case. On the contrary, Berlin has been supportive of the project and has repeatedly confirmed its commitment to the construction of the new pipeline.

Merkel's support for Nord Stream II has often been characterised as 'particularly puzzling' (Dempsey, 2016a). This is because the German Chancellor has been the 'one leader who has consistently taken a tough stance against Russian President Vladimir Putin' (ibid). She was also the one that convinced other EU member states to impose sanctions on Russia following the annexation of Crimea in 2014 and Russia's funding of separatist rebel groups in eastern Ukraine. Most importantly, it was Angela Merkel 'who has turned away from Germany's *Ostpolitik,* or Eastern policy' (ibid). Previous German Chancellors had pursued the strategy of rapprochement with Russia, assuming that it 'would stabilise Europe and nudge Russia towards modernisation' (ibid). In contrast to previous Chancellors, Dempsey suggests that Merkel 'has had no illusions about either goal' (Dempsey, 2016a). And since Nord Stream II 'runs contrary to Merkel's policy towards Russia', it was expected that Germany would not be willing to proceed with the construction of Nord Stream II, as that would undermine not only European unity on energy issues but also solidarity in its Russia policy (ibid). So, the question is why Merkel did not stop the construction of the pipeline?

According to Frymark and Ciechanowicz, regardless of the difficult relations between Moscow and Berlin, 'economic contacts continue to be a very important element of Germany's policy towards Russia' and are used to 'accelerate the normalisation in Berlin's relations with Moscow' (Frymark and Ciechanowicz, 2016). The authors argue that, in the second half of 2015, the economic dialogue between the two countries intensified, despite the decline in German-Russian trade (Destatis, 2015; Ciechanowicz, 2016). They attribute this to the temporary stabilisation of the situation in Ukraine, which allowed the economic ministries of the two countries to launch a Russian-German business platform, with the first meeting taking place in October 2015, followed by two visits by Sigmar Gabriel to Moscow in the role of the Federal Minister for Economic Affairs and Energy. Additionally, in November 2015, members of the Bundestag and Duma met in the Russian capital under the auspices of a newly established

energy task force (an extra-parliamentary body), with Nord Stream II being one of the most important topics for discussion (Ciechanowicz, 2016).

Clearly, the German FPE saw the construction of the pipeline as a major opportunity that would enhance the country's energy security, boost domestic business and generate jobs, which is why Berlin was determined to proceed with the implementation of the project, despite the fierce opposition of many EU member states. Official political support was granted to the project when the German Minister of Economy and Energy discussed the pipeline with President Putin and Gazprom's CEO Alexei Miller during his visit to Russia in October 2015.

To avoid criticism from its European partners, Germany tried to present the project as 'business undertaking that does not violate the sanctions and is in line with European energy policy' (Ciechanowicz, 2016). Merkel herself has defended the project as being commercial despite its intense politicisation (see Press conference with the President of Lithuania Dalia Grybauskaite, April 20, 2016).

It is important to note that, unlike in other European countries, the construction of Nord Stream II was not a key area of concern in German media or society in general. There were no public debates over the question of strengthening Germany's energy partnership with Russia or the possible negative consequences of the pipeline for Eastern European countries. Therefore, the support or opposition to the project did not cost anything for Merkel in terms of her approval ratings (Dempsey, 2016b).

However, Conservative and Green parliamentarians in Germany suggest that Merkel's support for the project stemmed from the fact that the Chancellor was 'reluctant to step into the fray' because she had to keep the Social Democrats on board (ibid). According to Dempsey, her support for Nord Stream II served as a pacifier within the coalition, and by allowing the SPD to get on with this, the Chancellor bought herself political space for political matters of greater importance to her party (Dempsey, 2016b).

Besides, there is a strong belief in Germany, dating back to Ostpolitik, that the German-Russian partnership in the sphere of raw materials leads to the growth of mutual economic benefits and contributes to improved interstate relations (Frymark and Ciechanowicz, 2016). The few critics that believe that the pipeline is not a good deal have focused their criticism on the threat to the implementation of the goals of the German Government's climate policy, increased energy dependence on Moscow, and blatant disregard for the interests of Germany's Central and Eastern European partners. For example, Ukraine could lose millions in transit fees if Russia employs Nord Stream II instead of the pipeline that transfers gas through Ukraine. However, not everyone shares the view that the pipeline is not a good deal.

The Social Democratic Party

According to a statement made by Sigmar Gabriel (ex-leader of SPD), during a meeting with President Putin, in October 2015, Nord Stream II was a good deal for both Germany and Europe for several reasons. For the SPD, Nord Stream II would help close a projected gap between Europe's stable demand for gas and declining intra-European production and possible disruption of gas supplies transported through Ukraine (Lewis and De Carbonnel, 2016). At the same time, the addition of the new pipeline could transform Germany into a European energy hub, boost domestic business and generate jobs (Delcker, 2016; Ciechanowicz, 2016). This would also allow German gas energy traders to buy Russian gas at low prices and resell it at a higher price to the Eastern European countries.

As Gabriel admitted to Putin during the meeting, the problem for Germany was to keep the construction of the pipeline under the competence of German authorities. As he explained to the Russian President, the way to do this was by making the case that the Nord Stream II was a purely commercial project. Gabriel seemed to be well aware that by doing this, the 'opportunities for external meddling will be limited', and Berlin would be 'in a good

negotiating position on this matter' (President of Russia, 2015b). However, it is important to mention that at the same meeting, Gabriel stressed the need to settle the 'issue of Ukraine's role as a transit nation after 2019' to 'limit political meddling' in the ongoing negotiations for the implementation of the project (ibid).

The SPD's support for Nord Stream II comes as no surprise. The party's pro-Russian course stems from the heritage of Ostpolitik, often described as 'the only successful project in foreign policy to be attributed to this party' (Ciechanowicz, 2016). West Germany's strategy of 'change through rapprochement' was proposed by Egon Bahr in a 1963 speech delivered at the Evangelical Academy in Tutzing. Bahr advocated for a policy of stronger cooperation, largely based on strengthening economic ties, aiming to dismantle the status quo in the long term. The speech signalled the change of the SPD's policies towards the communist East (Pollmann, 1984). Similarly, today, the SPD sees the strengthening of economic relations between Russia and Germany as the only way to normalise relations between the two countries.

Furthermore, the majority of Germans support the SPD's position on Russia. Surveys conducted in Germany regularly suggest that 'more than half, and sometimes up to two-thirds, of Germans believe that sanctions on Russian should be loosened or lifted completely' (Hoffmann, Müller, Neukirch, Pauly, Reuter, von Rohr and Schult, 2016). Interestingly, not only the majority of Germans are in favour of lifting sanctions imposed on Russia, but also according to a survey conducted by the influential German newspaper Die Zeit, in August 2016, 29 per cent of German citizens trust the Russian President as much or more than Chancellor Merkel (Hoffmann, Müller, Neukirch, Pauly, Reuter, von Rohr and Schult, 2016).

The German Business Sector

As was to be expected, German business is also supportive of the pro-Russian course of the Social Democrats, even though the industry leaders 'have not traditionally seen [the SPD] as

an ally' (ibid). There is a good reason for this support. It is no secret that since the introduction of sanctions in 2014, German exports to Russia dropped by 18 per cent, while there was a further 15 per cent decrease in exports in 2015.

The pro-Russian course is also supported by business lobbies in Germany. These, despite the developments, continue to seek the strengthening of German-Russian relations (Frymark and Ciechanowicz, 2016). A good example of this is the German-Russian Forum headed by Matthias Platzeck. The authors highlight that the management board of the forum includes former diplomats, such as Ernst-Jörg von Studnitz and Andreas Meyer-Landrut. Another well-known German-Russia forum is the Petersburg Dialogue. Between 2005 and 2015, it was headed by the former Prime Minister of the German Democratic Republic Lothar de Maizière, a strong supporter of close German-Russian relations. However, under the pressure of the German Federal Chancellery, a change of leadership was affected in favour of Ronald Pofalla, who was more critical of Moscow. Similarly, the Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik German Institute for International and Security Affairs has also sought a strengthening of Germany's energy relations with Russia.

Germany's Federal States

According to Frymark and Ciechanowicz (2016), Germany's Federal States are also involved in lobbying for the closest possible relations with Moscow. One prominent example is Bavaria, the stronghold of the regional conservative party, the Christian Social Union, sibling to Chancellor Merkel's CDU (Chase, 2017). Mecklenburg-Vorpommern is another Federal State lobbying for increased cooperation between Germany and Russia. The latter also hosts Russia Day, a German-Russian business event that usually attracts more than 500 participants, aiming to promote the direct exchange of information between companies and strengthening the existing trading relationship.

Despite the strong support in Germany for closer trade cooperation with Russia and the SPD's efforts to calm the fears of the critics over Nord Stream II, not everyone in Germany supported the construction of the pipeline. Manfred Weber, an MEP and a Christian Social Union MP, CDU's coalition partner in the German government, sent a letter to the Energy Commissioner Miguel Arias Cañete and the German Vice-Chancellor, Sigmar Gabriel, taking a strong position against the pipeline. In a letter dated April 26, 2016, Weber argued that Nord Stream II is incompatible with core EU principles and objectives and that by increasing the dependence on Gazprom, it would eventually undermine Europe's foreign and security goals (Oliver, 2016). Although Weber was not the only German official who expressed concerns over the construction of Nord Stream II, these voices had little impact on Berlin's position on Nord Stream II.

German Response to US sanctions

Despite the pressure, Germany's position on Nord Stream II did not change. As previous sections demonstrated, many in Germany considered Nord Stream II to be a good deal. The importance of the pipeline for Germany is evident by Berlin's fierce reaction to CAATSA in 2017 and NDAA in 2019.

After Trump signed CAATSA into law, Sigmar Gabriel, German Foreign Minister, and Christian Kern, Austrian Chancellor, issued an unusually strongly worded, joint statement characterising the US sanctions as illegal and a threat to EU energy security, one that 'impacts the European-American relations in a new and very negative way' (Federal Foreign Office, 2017a). In the letter, Gabriel and Kern also stated that 'Europe's energy supply is a matter for Europe, not the United States of America', and accused the US of using sanctions to boost its LNG exports to Europe, to 'secure jobs in the oil and gas industry in the US' (ibid). The next day, the German government spokesman, Steffen Seibert, while addressing reporters in Berlin,

stated that ‘Chancellor Merkel shares the concerns of Federal Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel and the Austrian Chancellor Christian Kern’ (Federal Foreign Office, 2017b).

The German Economy Minister, Brigitte Zypries, said that Germany has repeatedly requested ‘Washington not to include the provisions affecting European companies in a broader bill targeting Russia with sanctions, adding that unfortunately ‘that is exactly what they are doing’ (Radio Free Europe - Radio Liberty, 2017a). She also cautioned that ‘the Americans can’t punish German companies because they have business interests in another country’ and stressed that Germany considers ‘this (the bill) to be a violation of international law, plain and simple’ (Radio Free Europe - Radio Liberty, 2017b).

The spokesperson for the German Foreign Ministry, Martin Schaefer, during a press briefing on July 26, 2017, stated that ‘it is not in the Americans’ right to judge or stipulate which way European companies may engage in cooperation with any third parties – particularly with Russian energy companies’ (GeckoResearch, 2017). Schaefer also added that the US sanctions are alarming not only to the German industry and should not be used as a tool of US industrial policy (Sputnik, 2017).

Speaking at the same news conference, the deputy head of the Press and Information Office of the Federal Government, Ulrike Demmer, also stated that ‘European industry should not become the target of US sanctions’ (ibid). She also highlighted the importance of ‘close coordination between the US and the EU in the sanctions policy toward Russia’ (ibid).

The view that US sanctions are used as a tool to advance the United States’ commercial interests is also shared by the head of the German Chamber of Industry and Commerce (DIHK), Volker Treier (Heller, 2017). Treier suggested that US sanctions would force German and European companies to abandon large scale projects in Russia, hurt German companies and the economy, and endanger the country’s energy security (ibid).

Yet, according to Danel Fried, a former US diplomat, ‘European worries are exaggerated’ (Darasz, 2017). He told Deutsche Welle that the US and Europe had an agreement that they would not go after the gas sector, highlighting that the section on sanctions was discretionary, not mandatory and that ‘it tells the administration to implement it in coordination with its allies’ (ibid). He also stated that the ‘origins of this bill have nothing to do with the criticism of Europe’, adding that Congress ‘was not going after Europe and this bill was not based on an assumption that Europe is not doing its part’ (Darasz, 2017). Darasz argued that the Bill was an expression of ‘Congress’s ire at the Russians for its cyber hacking and a kind of frustration with the Russian aggression generally’ (ibid).

Although shortly after CAATSA was signed into law, the State Department issued public guidance exempting Nord Stream II from the sanction, when NDAA was passed in December 2019, it was clear that this time Washington was determined to stop the construction of the pipeline.

In response to DNAA, Heiko Maas, the German Foreign Minister, accused Washington of ‘interference in autonomous decisions taken in Europe’ (BBC, 2019). Similarly, Olaf Scholz, the German Finance Minister also characterised the legislation as ‘serious interference in Germany and Europe’s internal affairs’ and told the ARD, a German TV channel, that Berlin objects ‘to them in the strongest terms’ (Chazan, 2019).

The sanctions were, however, welcomed by the opponents of the pipeline in Europe, where Germany’s Nord Stream II deal with Russia was not seen positively by Central and Eastern European states for different reasons. Germany had also previously opposed the construction of South Stream, a project that was eventually abandoned by Russia after much pressure from Brussels and Washington. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that Berlin’s plans to build Nord Stream II in partnership with Gazprom infuriated Italy’s Prime Minister Matteo Renzi, who accused Germany of double standards (Oliver, 2016). The Slovak Prime Minister,

Robert Fico, characterised the deal as a ‘betrayal’ that would deprive his country and Ukraine of billions, while the Polish President, Andrzej Duda, called Germany’s commitment to Nord Stream II an example of ‘national egoism, which completely ignores the interests of other countries’ (Gurzu, 2015).

Of all the EU member states, Poland has been the most vocal opponent of Nord Stream II. The next section will examine how the Polish Foreign Policy Executive has interpreted the threats and opportunities emanating from the external environment and will look into how Polish interests clash with German interests over Nord Stream II.

8.6 Poland: Nord Stream II as a threat

Whilst the Russian-German energy partnership clearly benefits ‘Old Europe’, ‘New Europe’ is terrified of the idea of a ‘new era of gas-leveraged Russian domination of the former Soviet bloc’ (Kramer, 2009). As mentioned in the previous chapters of this thesis, Poland has been the strongest critic of the Russian pipelines of all the Central and Eastern European states, with Polish officials being particularly vocal in opposing both Nord Stream I and Nord Stream II.

The Polish interpretation of Russian energy policy towards Europe and the expansion of the country’s gas pipeline system, as a threat, stems from its experience of forty years of imposed communism. Today, it seems that Polish foreign policy and energy policy are primarily based on the fear that the Russian President, Vladimir Putin, wants to restore the Soviet Empire.

This view has been expressed by many high-level officials in Poland. For example, in an interview with Polish Press Agency, in June 2017, the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs Witold Waszczykowski said that

> We have known for a long time that the Russians are doing everything in their power to change the security architecture that was built after the end of the Cold War. In

> addition to the military means that they used in Georgia, Syria and Ukraine to restore the status they had when they were the Soviet Union, they also use other means, including energy, in the form of petro-diplomacy. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Poland, 2017).

This statement clearly expresses Warsaw's concerns over Moscow's foreign and energy policies. It shows that Polish foreign policy executives perceive the Russian military and energy threat as genuine. In this context, Warsaw views Nord Stream I and II as important assets 'in the game for Russia to regain its influence' in the post-Soviet space (Wojcieszak, 2017, 88). Poland understands that the construction of Nord Stream II will significantly reduce the role of the existing transit countries, including that of Poland. The addition of two more lines to those of Nord Stream I will enable Russia to suspend gas transmission through the Yamal pipeline. As a result, Poland and Ukraine may lose their status as transit countries and their associated transit fees. Thus, Warsaw interprets the new pipeline as 'representing a German-Russian alliance at the expense of Poland, Ukraine and other countries in the region' (Dempsey, 2016). For these reasons, the pipeline has been one of the most crucial points of the dispute between Poland and Germany.

The Law and Justice Party – Opening Poland's Black Box

Relations between Germany and Poland deteriorated significantly after the decisive electoral victory of the Law and Justice Party in October 2015. The previous Tusk government, which was credited with building a closer relationship with its European counterparts, although remaining Atlanticist, appeared less subservient towards the United States (Longhurst, 2008), than the new Eurosceptic government that moved much closer to the US on foreign policy issues.

Poland's new right-wing government introduced several reforms that suggested significant changes in its domestic politics and stance towards the EU. One of the first reforms

aimed to bring the judicial system under political control, raising concerns in Europe. Despite winning 37.5 per cent of the vote, the President of the EU Parliament, Martin Schultz, characterised the Polish government's attempts to push through reforms to the judiciary as a 'coup' (Schulz, 2015). In response, the Polish Prime Minister, Beata Szydlo, told the press in Warsaw that something 'is wrong when the European Parliament president expresses his opinion in this way about a member state' (Rettman, 2015). While the Polish Defence Minister, Antoni Macierewicz, responded by stating that he refused to 'take lessons in freedom and democracy' from Germany (Wilson, 2016).

The new government also introduced a controversial law in January 2016 that increased state control over the media. According to the new legislation, the Treasury Minister and not the National Broadcasting Council would appoint managers and the supervisory board members of Poland's public broadcasters. At the same time, staff members were fired and replaced soon after the legislation came into force. This triggered the European Commission to assess whether Warsaw was in breach of the EU's fundamental values (Wilson, Business Insider January 14, 2016).

Another area of concern for the EU was the conflict between Berlin and Warsaw over the recent immigration crisis and the relocation of refugees. In December 2015, during an interview with the Berliner Zeitung and Frankfurter Rundschau, the Polish foreign minister, Witold Waszczykowski stated that Germany should not expect solidarity from Poland on refugee relocation, as Berlin did not show solidarity towards Polish workers by maintaining restrictions on free movement after the 2004 enlargement (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Poland, 2015b).

These changes in Poland's domestic politics and stance towards the EU that resulted from the change in government worsened the already strained relations between Poland and Germany. Even though the new government supported Poland's EU membership, it appeared

to be ‘committed to opposing further European integration and defending Polish sovereignty’ (Szczerbiak, 2015). Szczerbiak suggests that ‘this is especially the case in the moral-cultural sphere where it rejects what it sees as a hegemonic EU liberal-left consensus that undermines Poland’s traditional values and national identity’ (Szczerbiak, 2015). Furthermore, the Law and Justice party viewed European mainstream politics as being driven by Germany and argued that instead of merely being a follower, Poland needed ‘be more robust and assertive in advancing its national interest’ (ibid).

This is also evident in the new government’s Eastern policy, which in the aftermath of the 2014 Ukraine crisis, has sought the implementation of much tougher EU and NATO policies towards Russia. The new government stated that the previous Administration’s ‘occasional flushes of anti-Moscow rhetoric, [were] constrained by its unwillingness to move too far beyond the EU consensus, and act as a counterbalance to the major European powers which, it argues, were over-conciliatory towards Moscow’ (ibid). This, according to the Polish officials, in turn, resulted in a less effective Eastern policy.

While the change of leadership in Poland led to a change in perspective and stance on a number of issues, there is certainly one issue where the Polish position has remained unchanged: Nord Stream II.

Change in leadership but not in the stance towards Nord Stream II.

On December 15, 2015, in an interview with the Berliner Zeitung and Frankfurter Rundschau, the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs stated that his Administration was ‘shocked’ by the expansion of the Nord Stream pipeline. While a couple of months earlier, during an economic forum in Poland, President Duda expressed his dissatisfaction about the fact that Polish interests had been completely ignored and stated that the conclusion of the agreement on

building Nord Stream II (June 2015) called into question the EU's unity in the 28-member European Union (Euroactiv, 2015).

Earlier, in 2014, the Polish government warned Germany 'that Nord Stream 1 was a political project designed to bypass Central Europe and to possibly create an option for blackmail' (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Poland, 2015b). Waszczykowski also pointed out that Berlin was 'repeating the same mistake and trying to tell us that it is not a political gas pipeline, but a private business venture' (ibid). However, according to the Foreign Minister, the Polish government was well aware that it is the 'powerful Russian state' and the 'large [German] corporations, which realise German state policy...', that is behind the construction of Nord Stream II (ibid).

The Deputy Foreign Minister, Konrad Szymanski, in an interview for *Gazeta Polska Codziennie*, discussed the importance of communicating the reasons behind Poland's resistance to Nord Stream II to EU member states (ibid). Szymanski pointed out that Poland's opposition to Nord Stream II 'does not hinge on any particular aspect of Polish-Russian relations, but rather on the fact that this investment not only does not serve Poland well, but it also does not serve Europe well' (ibid). He also added that 'Poland has long been voicing serious doubts, specifically in discussions with the European Commission, whether the Nord Stream II project meets any of the legal or strategic criteria acceptable to the EU' (ibid).

In an attempt to reassure the Polish Administration, Sigmar Gabriel, during a day-long visit to Poland on January 29, 2016, stressed that Germany would only proceed with Nord Stream II if Moscow continued the gas flows through Ukraine after the end of the transit contract in 2019. Despite German attempts to convince Warsaw that Nord Stream II would not constitute a threat to Poland, Polish officials continued to see the pipeline as a threat to their energy and national security and that of the whole of Central and Eastern Europe. In fact, in another interview with the German newspaper, *Die Welt*, Minister Waszczykowski argued that

Nord Stream II was ‘test of the EU’s credibility on limiting the negative effects of this project’ while he warned that the EU risks becoming increasingly dependent on Moscow for energy supplies that could lead to ‘a geopolitical destabilisation in Central Europe’ (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Poland, 2016).

Since the announcement of the plans to build the pipeline, Polish MEPs have been very active in the EU Parliamentary debates on Nord Stream II. In one of these, on July 15 2015, Marek Józef Gróbarczyk, a Polish MEP, expressed the view that the construction of the Nord Stream II contradicts the idea of the Energy Union (EU Parliament, 2015). A few months later, on October 7, 2019, during an EP debate on doubling the capacity of the Nord Stream pipeline and the effects on the energy union and security of supply, MEP Gróbarczyk appeared frustrated with the Commission’s position that the pipeline is a private initiative on which it has no influence.

Polish officials have undertaken other initiatives to stop Nord Stream II besides the pressure placed by Polish MEPs on EU institutions and bodies via parliamentary questions. For example, the Polish Administration filed a complaint to the European Court of Justice against the EU decision to allow Gazprom to use 80 per cent of Opal’s capacity (Nord Stream I overland extension) instead of 50 per cent until 2033, which gave Russia the right to pump ‘over 20 billion cubic meters of additional gas via the Nord Stream 1 pipeline to Germany’ (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Poland, 2016). It is important to mention that Opal, since its launch in 2011, has been 100 per cent exempt from the rules set in the third energy package. The European Commission revised the exemption decision granting permission to use only 50 per cent of Opal’s capacity in 2016. (EU Commission Press Release, October 28, 2016). The MFA Spokesperson, Joanna Wajda told the Polish Press Agency that ‘the decision violates the EU directive for the internal market in natural gas’ and will have a ‘harmful effect on competition in Central and Eastern European gas markets because it additionally strengthens

Gazprom's position as a gas supplier' (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Poland, 2016). The Wajda added that in 'its complaint, the MFA charges the Commission with violating the rules of energy security and energy solidarity' (ibid). As a result of the Polish complaint, the European Court of Justice suspended the Commission's decision and forced Gazprom to cut back its use to 50 per cent of Opal's capacity.

Later, on April 24, 2017, the Polish competition authority blocked the creation of a joint venture between Gazprom, Royal Dutch Shell, Uniper, OMV and Engie, for the development of the pipeline, claiming that the project 'could lead to restriction of competition' (Polish Competition Authority, 2016; Enerdata, 2016). According to the press release, the main issue was that 'Gazprom has a dominant position on the market when it comes to supplying gas to Poland, and the deal could strengthen further the company's negotiating position with regard to users in Poland' (Polish Competition Authority, 2016).

Soon after, the companies submitted their joint response to the Statement of Objections of the Polish Competition Authority, notifying that the 'applicants have decided to jointly withdraw their merger control notification from the Polish competition authority' (Nord Stream 2 AG, 2016). According to the applicants' press release, all 'the applicants believe that the project is crucial for the European energy system and each of them will therefore individually contemplate alternative ways to contribute to it' (ibid). Furthermore, the same press release suggested that the 'applicants' decision to withdraw the notification would not affect the continuation by Nord Stream II AG of the construction of the Nord Stream II pipelines as planned, including its scheduling' (ibid).

However, Poland's attempts to block the construction of Nord Stream II and reduce the reliance on Russian natural gas were not limited to actions taken at the Intra-EU level. Evidence shows that Warsaw worked with Washington to achieve both goals.

Hillary Clinton's memoir reveals that during a telephone conversation with Radosław Sikorski, Polish Foreign Minister, after the 2009 Russia-Ukraine crisis, he stated that Poland was in need of a new energy policy and a new source of natural gas (Clinton, 2014). In fact, according to the memoir, Sikorski said that he favoured a pipeline that would transfer natural gas from the Caspian Sea to Europe through the Balkans and Turkey (ibid). This pipeline became known as the Southern Corridor Pipeline, and it 'emerged as one of the most important energy diplomacy initiatives' (ibid, 212). In response, Clinton appointed Ambassador Richard Morningstar as her special envoy to 'negotiate the necessary agreement to get the project going' (ibid).

According to her memoir, Clinton visited Azerbaijan twice 'to encourage regional peace efforts, promote democratic reforms, and move the pipeline forward, including by meeting industry leaders at the annual Caspian Oil & Gas Show in Baku in 2012' (Clinton, 2014, p). Clinton also stated that when she visited Poland in 2010, she made a joint announcement with Sikorski about their agreement to develop 'Polish-American cooperation on a global shale gas initiative to capitalise on new technologies' (Clinton, 2014, p).

Energy security has always been part of the agenda in US-Polish officials meetings. On June 30, 2017, the Polish Foreign Minister, in an interview with the Polish Press Agency, stated that security and energy cooperation would be one of the main topics discussed with the US President at the upcoming meeting (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Poland Press, 2017a). He admitted that this topic had been a priority over the years. Waszczykowski also referred to the US military presence in Poland and the American military base in Redzikowo, which according to the Foreign Minister, was planned to be operational in 2018 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Poland, 2017). He explained that this 'means that from next year we will have a permanent US base in Poland, a solid foundation for military cooperation' (Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Poland, 2017).

According to the interview, Waszczykowski noted that at the meeting with the US President, Poland would also discuss economic cooperation in the field of energy. The minister explained that in an attempt to diversify gas imports due to worries over Russian gas being used ‘as an instrument of blackmail’, they had built an LNG terminal and were expanding their network of interconnectors in Europe (ibid). The new infrastructure projects would allow them to import liquefied gas from the United States. He also stated that Poland had already ‘carried out a pilot project’ to ensure that they were technically ready to receive shale gas from America (ibid).

Energy security has been a central topic of every meeting between the Polish and US leadership. A joint statement by President Trump and President Duda issued on September 18, 2018, clearly shows that. According to the statement, the two countries were determined to ‘enhance cooperation on energy security’ and ‘explore new opportunities stemming from the transformation of energy markets’ (White House, 2018). The statement also highlights that Washington and Warsaw continued to coordinate to stop energy projects that threatened their security and supported efforts to enhance energy cooperation and diversification (ibid).

More recently, in July 2019, US Energy Secretary Rick Perry, after meeting Polish officials, openly stated that Washington was helping Warsaw to reduce its dependence on Russian natural gas by exporting more US shale gas to Poland (Reuters, 2019b). According to Reuters (2019), three US companies Cheniere Energy, Sempra Energy, and Venture Global LNG, signed long-term agreements with Warsaw.

Poland’s state-owned oil and gas company, Polskie Gornictwo Naftowe I Gazownictwo SA (PGNiG), has signed a twenty-year deal with Sempra Energy, a US-based firm, to buy two million tonnes a year of American shale gas, with exports starting in 2023 (Crooks, 2018). A number of high US officials, including John Sullivan, the US deputy secretary of state, and

Mark Menezes, the undersecretary of energy, attended the signing ceremony for the contract in Warsaw.

High-ranking US officials' presence constitutes evidence that Trump's promotion of LNG had a strong political character – although exports of shale gas make also sense from a commercial point of view. This was also evident in US Energy Secretary Rick Perry's statement that the agreement with PGNiG marked 'an important step toward Poland's energy independence and security' (ibid).

According to the Financial Times, the contract followed on from similar deals which were signed with Cheniere Energy in November 2018 and Venture Global in October 2018 (ibid). These deals concerned the provision of approximately forty per cent of Poland's 2017 gas consumption (ibid). Warsaw was also planning to install a second LNG import terminal in the hope to end imports from Gazprom once its agreement with the Russian energy giant expires on December 31, 2022 (Cocklin, 2019).

In the last few years, Poland has taken several important steps to diversify its gas supplies away from Russia, including increasing imports of gas from Qatar and the US and giving the go-ahead for a new pipeline to import gas from Norway. According to Piotr Wozniak, Management Board President of PGNiG, the decision not to renew the Yamal contract with Gazprom after its expiry at the end of 2022 aligns with an 'aspiration to achieve security of energy supplies' (ibid).

More recently, in December 2019, Poland welcomed the passing of NDAA and the imposition of long-awaited Nord Stream II related sanctions (Francis, 2019). This comes as no surprise as Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki admitted to newspaper Dziennik Gazeta Prawna in 2017 that Warsaw and Washington are working together and want to ensure that the pipeline would fall under the US sanctions bill (Reuters, 2018).

Overall, it can be argued that Poland's interpretation of Russian energy policy towards Europe and the expansion of its energy infrastructure to Europe as a threat stems from its historical experience and the fear that Putin wants to restore the Soviet Empire. In the period between 2015-2019, Warsaw continued to view its energy independence as strongly linked to its national independence from Moscow. In order to ensure its independence from Russia, Poland has vehemently opposed the construction of Nord Stream II and intensified its efforts to diversify its supplies away from Russia with the support of the United States.

Conclusion: To what extent has Great Power competition affected the development of a common European energy security policy?

This study found that the US-Russian security competition has affected the development of European energy security policy between 2015-2019. The findings of this case study, when combined with the findings of Chapter Five and the information discussed in Chapter Four, suggest that as the competition between the US and Russia intensified, Washington and Moscow adopted measures that have accelerated or delayed the development of a 'meaningful' common energy security policy in the EU.

Russia

Russia's Nord Stream II is the latest addition to Gazprom's transit route diversification policy, or in other words, it is Gazprom's latest attempt to minimise or even avoid the delivery of Russian gas via the Ukrainian pipeline. The construction of the pipeline has taken place in a significantly different environment to that of its twin pipeline, Nord Stream I. Nord Stream I was planned and built during a time when Moscow was still seen as a partner and the Energy Union was a dream that would never materialise. This study found that the construction of

Nord Stream II, in contrast, took place when Russia was by and large seen as a threat that needed to be contained. By this time, the Energy Union was a work in progress, and thus, Nord Stream II faced legal obstacles that did not exist when Nord Stream I was built. Moreover, the pipeline deal divided Europe, thus delaying the establishment of a meaningful Energy Union.

US

The announcement of Nord Stream II has triggered a fierce reaction from the United States, with many US officials stating that the pipeline is a threat to European security.

Concerns over the expansion of Russian energy infrastructure in Europe are presented in a number of US strategic documents published between 2015-2020. From the analysis of National Security Strategy 2015 (NSS-2015) and National Security Strategy 2017 (NSS-2017), it is evident that the EU's energy security is of paramount importance to the United States, although the documents do not specify for what reason. However, a careful analysis of the International Security Advisory Reports (ISAB) shows that European energy security is not Washington's only concern and perhaps not even the primary concern. In the report, US national security experts highlight the threats emanating from huge revenues that the Russian energy exports generate, emphasising that there is a link between energy exports and Russia's foreign policy behaviour. The view expressed in the Report is that revenues from increased exports translate into a more aggressive Russian foreign policy, which can threaten US interests.

Overall, from the analysis of the NSS-2015, NSS-2017 and the ISAB report, it can be concluded that, between 2014 and 2017, Washington had multiple reasons to restrict the expansion of the Russian gas infrastructure to Europe and promote the diversification of European supplies away from Russia. Although the US efforts to restrict the expansion of Russian gas infrastructure to Europe never really stopped, these efforts intensified due to the

deterioration in US-Russian relations, following Moscow's support of the Assad regime in Syria, the annexation of Crimea in 2014 and interference in the US presidential election in 2016.

This study shows that US efforts to stop the construction of Nord Stream II and reduce European dependence on Russian gas between 2015 and 2019 took three primary forms. The first took the form of pressure exerted on Gazprom's European partners, such as Germany, and support provided to Nord Stream II European opponents such as Poland. Here this study has concluded that Washington's threats had little impact on Berlin's determination to proceed with the construction of the pipeline. In fact, Germany has reacted fiercely to US threats and the announcement of Nord Stream II related sanctions later in 2017 and 2019, accusing Washington of intervention in its foreign affairs. Poland, in contrast, has been a strong supporter of the US anti-Nord Stream II policy. The current study found that diversification of supplies away from Russian energy resources and efforts to stop Nord Stream II have become priority topics during meetings. Although Poland's fierce opposition to Nord Stream II is not unexpected, considering all the problems of the Polish-Russian relations, without a doubt, US backing visibly strengthened Warsaw's voice against the construction of Nord Stream II both within and outside the EU.

The second took the form of coordination with Brussels on energy-related matters via the EU-US Energy Council meetings, a platform for transatlantic dialogue on energy. Although it is hard to conclude how much influence exactly the US officials have had on EU energy policy via the EU-US Energy Council, one must highlight that the platform allowed US officials to be in regular contact with those in charge of the Energy Union. The evidence also demonstrates that energy security has been a high priority in these meetings, with emphasis placed on diversification of supplies away from Russia, an idea that Washington has been actively promoting since the Cold War era. Considering the fact that the efforts to establish an

Energy Union came in response to the threat emanating from the increased reliance on Russian gas, and that the US has strongly supported the diversification of supplies away from Russia, it can be concluded that the US has good reasons to strongly support the development of a common European energy security policy.

The third and the most effective measure was the imposition of Nord Stream II-related sanctions in December 2019, as a result of which Allseas, the pipelaying contractor, suspended work on building the pipeline.

To summarise, the evidence from the study suggests that although US-Russian security competition has affected the development of the European energy security policy, there are other important factors, such as the tense relations between Russia and the Central and Eastern European states, that contributed to the creation of the Energy Union.

The application of Theory

The application of neoclassical realism and, more specifically, of the Two-Level Model, in this case, has enabled a more complete examination of the phenomenon under investigation. This is because it has allowed for a more detailed investigation of each of the two levels of analysis.

At the Great Power Level (Level 1) it has allowed examining how the strategic culture and US policymakers' interpretation of Russian energy exports as a source of Russian power has intensified the competition with Russia over the European energy sector between 2015 and 2019, and explain the measures adopted to restrict the export of Russian gas to Europe. At the Intra-European Level, it enabled the examination of European leaders' interpretation of the external environment shaped by the Great-Power competition and helped understand how this is then translated into specific foreign policy decisions.

The incorporation of intervening variables such as leaders' images but also that of the strategic culture (discussed in Chapter Four) allowed explaining why EU member states such

as Germany and Poland have responded in different ways to the systemic pressure generated by the Great Power competition. Additionally, using a neoclassical realist-based approach has allowed bringing out other internal factors that have affected the development of European energy security policy besides external pressure. This would not be possible without the incorporation of intervening variables into the analysis. Thus, it can be argued that this theoretical approach brings out aspects that other theoretical approaches do not.

Conclusion

This thesis has shown that the Great Power competition has had an impact on the development of the common European energy security policy between 1990 and 2019. More specifically, it has demonstrated that as the competition between the US and Russia intensified, both countries took a number of measures that affected the development of the common energy policy in the EU. However, this thesis also showed that other important factors played a significant role in establishing the Energy Union.

The purpose of this final chapter is to discuss the findings of this study and to highlight the original contributions of this research project to the literature on EU energy security policy, EU-Russia energy relations, and US-Russia relations.

The chapter is structured as follows. The first section of this chapter will present the aims of this thesis and discuss its original contributions to the literature and explain how the Two-Level Neoclassical Realist model informed this study. The second section will present the key results of the research. The final two sections will then focus on the limitations of this research project and future research potential.

Aims of the thesis and its original contributions to the literature

Aims

This thesis aimed to answer the following research question: To what extent has the US-Russia security competition affected the development of a common European energy security policy. The examination of this question is important because it sheds light on the extent to which the development of the European energy security policy was a response to external pressures and incentives in addition to being internally generated.

Contributions

The present study makes several noteworthy contributions to the academic literature. First, this work contributes to the literature by examining an original research question. Although existing publications cover many aspects of the EU's energy security policy and the EU's energy relationship with Russia, and different facets of US-Russia relations, studies combining these three areas have not been sufficiently undertaken.

For example, several authors studying EU energy security policy or EU-Russian energy relations (Casier, 2011; Dannreuther, 2016; Proedrou, 2012; Siddi, 2017a) have reported that the US-Russia competition for influence in the post-Soviet space spilt over into EU-Russian energy relations; however, they have not undertaken any further investigation of this phenomenon.

Similarly, a search of the literature on US-Russia relations revealed that while a number of publications (Goldman, 2008; Graebner, Burns and Siracusa; 2008; Perovic, Orttung and Wenger, 2009; Stent, 2014; Perovic, 2017) have discussed Cold War energy wars between the US and Russia, the publications on US-Russian relations in the post-Cold War era (Tsygankov, 2012; Allison, 2013; Gvosdev and Marsh, 2013; Leichtova, 2014; Bradshaw and Connolly, 2016; Perovic et al., 2017; Sakwa, 2017a) have failed to investigate the impact of Great Power competition on European energy politics.

Perhaps the only exception to this is a commentary published by Lohmann and Westphal (2019), in which the authors draw parallels between the past and the present and conclude that the geopolitical dispute between the US and Russia might impact European energy security. However, this discussion is limited. The authors do not investigate the complexities of US-Russian competition or its impact on European energy security policy. Thus, this is the first extensive study investigating the impact of Great Power competition on European energy politics in the post-Cold War era.

Second, this project contributes to the academic literature by presenting a new variant of the Neoclassical Realist framework. Following an extensive review of the competing theoretical approaches, it was decided that Neoclassical Realism constitutes the optimal theoretical basis for this study as it allows researchers to answer questions on which other theoretical approaches cannot shed sufficient light. However, due to the complexity of the phenomenon under investigation, Neoclassical Realism in its original formulation could not be applied to this project. Thus, this study presented a new variant of Neoclassical Realism, the Two-Level Model.

The Two-Level Model, whilst based on the main principles and ideas of Neoclassical Realism, in contrast to the original theory, allows for a two-level analysis: the Great Power Level (Level I) and the Intra-European Level (Level II). Most importantly, it allows an examination of the extent to which developments at Level I can affect Level II developments. In this way, new insights into the explanatory power of Neoclassical Realism have been produced. Moreover, as will be discussed in the final section of this chapter, the Two-Level Neoclassical Realist Model presented in this thesis has a strong potential for application in further research in a range of areas.

This work also adds to the existing knowledge by presenting empirical information and new insights based on that information. The empirical information gathered for this study was obtained through the analysis of more than one hundred primary documents and hundreds of secondary sources (books, journal articles and news reports). The primary sources include declassified (US) Central Intelligence Agency materials, Director of (US) Central Intelligence Testimonies and Briefings, US House of Representative and US Senate Resolutions, Declassified Soviet documents, Energy Security Strategies of the Russian Federation up to 2020 and 2030, National Security Strategy of the Russian Federation up to 2020, governmental

reports, EU parliament reports, EU Commission Strategic Reviews and EU member states policy documents.

The empirical materials obtained shed much light on the impact of Great Power competition on European energy politics, US-Russian relations in general, and the clashing energy and national security interests of EU member states.

Building on these findings, the final way in which this thesis contributes to the academic literature is through its analytical insights. As the results section later in this chapter shows, several interesting findings emerged from this study.

The findings of this study could also be used to inform policymakers in Europe about the impact of US-Russian security competition on energy politics and policy in Europe, and the strategies the two states use to achieve their goal. This could help European policymakers to craft effective strategies that could prevent or limit such impact in future.

In sum, this thesis contributes to the academic literature in several ways. It examines an original research question; it presents a new variant of the Neoclassical Realist analytical framework; it contributes to the existing knowledge by presenting empirical information and new insights based on that information and contributes to the academic literature through its analytical insights. Finally, this study could also inform European policymakers about the effects of Great Power competition on European energy politics and policy, allowing them to prevent or limit the negative impact.

How the Two-Level Model informed this study

As mentioned in an earlier section, this study employed a neoclassical realist model to shed light on the phenomenon under investigation. The research question determined the choice of theory as the question investigated in this study is a parallel question to the one that

Neoclassical Realism answers: To what degree state x's policy is a response to external pressure and incentives in addition to being internally generated?

The application of a new Neoclassical Realist Model to this study allowed for a more complete examination of the phenomenon under investigation. This is because it allowed an examination of a wider set of factors that have impacted the development of European energy security policy other than internal factors. This was made possible because, in contrast to other theories reviewed in chapter three, Neoclassical Realism incorporates both external and internal variables, allowing the researcher to take into consideration both systemic pressure and unit-level variables (such as leaders' images and strategic culture) as drivers of foreign policy.

Furthermore, the Two-Level Neoclassical Realist Model allows the researcher to place each of the two levels of analysis, the Great Power Level and the Intra-EU Level, under the microscope, thus enabling a more detailed investigation of each level. This, in turn, helps to explain how the actors at each level interpreted and responded to threats and opportunities and, most importantly, how the developments at one level affected the developments at the other level.

At the Great Power Level, this approach shed light on how the change in Russia's relative power in the post-Cold War era revived the security competition between the US and Russia and the role of historical experiences and leaders' images in the US and Russian foreign policy.

At the Intra-European Level, the Two-Level Model helped explain how the European policymakers translated the pressures and incentives generated by Great Power competition into their energy security policies.

However, the Two-Level Model was not particularly helpful when it came to the Level 2 analysis of the first case study, the case of Energy Union. It is difficult to explain this result,

but it might be related to the fact that the focus here was on the EU institutions, and more specifically, on the EU Commission, as opposed to states. Since the main 'recipients' of the systemic pressure and the main drivers of European energy policy are the EU member states, the focus on EU institutions revealed little about the phenomenon under investigation.

However, as the case studies of South Stream and Nord Stream I and the case study of Nord Stream II have demonstrated, the Two-Level Model helped produce new insights that other theories most probably would have failed to uncover as they tend to downplay the importance of domestic level variables or material and ideational factors.

Results of the case studies

The cases used for this study covered the whole period between the early post-Cold War era and 2019. In fact, in order to get a broader picture of the phenomenon under investigation, the first case study also examined the US-Soviet energy wars during the late Cold War era. The coverage of different periods of time allowed repeated observation of the impact that US-Russian competition had on the establishment of a common European energy security policy, thus allowing the identification of patterns. Several interesting findings emerged from this research project.

Case study findings

The case studies used in this project have consistently shown that the US-Russia security competition has significantly impacted European energy politics and the development of a common energy security policy in the EU. However, the impact varies across time; the evidence analysed for this project shows that the more intense competition between the US and

Russia was, the greater was its impact on the development of a common European energy security policy.

More concretely, as was demonstrated in Chapter Five, during the Cold War, when the security competition between the US and Soviet Union was intense, the United States put significant effort into restricting the Soviet-European energy partnership. For example, in order to delay or suspend the expansion of Soviet pipelines to Europe, the US sent delegations to European capitals to persuade Europeans to refrain from signing agreements on pipelines, imposed embargoes on the supply of energy-related equipment to USSR, and promoted alternative energy suppliers such as Algeria and Nigeria. All these measures were intended to constrain Soviet-European energy trade to protect US national security interests.

One would expect these efforts would stop following the collapse of the Soviet Union, but the current study found that this was not the case; Washington never ceased monitoring the energy partnership between the European states and Russia. However, evidence points to the fact that the US was less concerned about the EU-Russian energy partnership between 1991 and 2003. But as US-Russian relations deteriorated in the following years and the competition between Moscow and Washington intensified, the US appeared more determined to restrict energy trade between Russia and Europe.

For example, as demonstrated in Chapter Five, in the early post-Cold War years, although the US considered Russia too weak to pose a threat to its interests, it still saw energy exports as a tool that Moscow could use to advance its interests in its neighbourhood. However, at this time, Washington seemed more concerned about the reliance of ex-Soviet states on Russian energy resources than that of EU member states. This study found two reasons for this.

First, the EU-Russian energy partnership was of little concern in Washington due to close transatlantic relations. Washington did not see that the energy trade between Russia and

Western Europe could increase Moscow's political influence in Europe or create divisions between Western Europe and the United States.

Second, although by 2001, Washington became aware that Russia's energy exports were fuelling the country's economic recovery, allowing Moscow to increase its military spending (Tenet, 2001), many in the US viewed Russia as so weak that they considered its recovery as highly unlikely (Graham Jr., 2002). For example, Chapter Five found that the US intelligence services were convinced that years of increases would be required to deal with the problems built up in Russia's forces under Boris Yeltsin and that energy prices would not remain high for long enough to allow Russia to deal with these issues effectively (Tenet, 2001). So, although, at this time, Washington was aware of the importance of energy exports for Russia's economy and military power, Russian gas exports to Europe were not of particular concern, as Russia was seen as too weak to pose a threat to the US interests.

Period	State of competition	Impact of GP competition on the development of European energy security policy
1991-2004	The US is the dominant global power ▪ Washington sees Russia as too weak to pose a threat to the US → no Great Power competition	→ Increased energy supplies to Europe not a threat to the US ▪ European energy partnership with Russia of no interest to the US ▪ Common energy security policy not a priority for EU member states

Table 11 Summary table of the impact of GP competition on European security energy policy between 1991-2004.

Source: Created by the author

In this context, it can be suggested that in the absence of security competition between the United States and Russia – Russia was not seen as a Great Power at this time - European dependence on Russian energy resources was not a concern for Washington between 1991 and

2003. As a result, the US took no measures that affected energy trade between the EU and Russia during this time and put no effort into influencing European energy politics (see Table 11).

However, Chapters Six and Seven showed that as the competition between the US and Russia grew between 2004 and 2014, Moscow and Washington adopted several measures that affected the development of a common EU energy security policy (see table 12). On the one hand, Russia's pipeline deals and 'special' energy contracts with major EU countries left Europe divided, thus delaying the establishment of a common energy security policy in the EU. On the other hand, the US took a number of measures to convince its European allies to withdraw from Russian gas pipeline projects and reduce their reliance on Russian gas supplies.

More specifically, to promote its energy interests abroad, Russia employed bilateral energy diplomacy. By offering pipeline contracts and special gas deals, Moscow, whether intentionally or not, divided Europe into two camps: one would benefit from the construction of the pipelines and the special energy deals while the other saw increased Russian gas exports to Europe as a threat. This delayed the creation of a common European energy policy as the major European countries (Old Europe) that benefited from these agreements resisted the development of a common European approach towards Russia because bilateral energy agreements served their interests better.

The current study found that the potential gains from the construction of the South Stream and Nord Stream I for Gazprom's European partners (security of supply and lower gas prices) outweighed any calls for solidarity with Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries. For example, in the case of South Stream, Hungary ignored all calls for solidarity with CEE, clearly prioritising Budapest's energy and economic interests over the collective European interests. Similarly, the case of Nord Stream I shows that Berlin also refused to give up the benefits of its 'special partnership' with Moscow and the advantages of a direct pipeline from

Russia to Germany despite all calls for solidarity with CEE and the intra-European opposition to the construction of the pipeline. Thus, although the delay in the development of a common European energy security policy is a result of the preference of individual EU member states to act in their own self-interest over a common European interest, Russia's energy policy towards Europe has divided EU member states and delayed the development of a common energy security policy in the EU.

In the case of the US, Chapters Six and Seven demonstrated that as the relations between the US and Russia deteriorated, Washington adopted several measures to restrict Russian gas exports to Europe and reduce the dependence of European states on Russian gas supplies. These measures included efforts to convince EU member states to diversify their energy supplies away from Russia by encouraging the adoption of energy efficiency measures and supporting the construction of alternatives to Russian pipelines. For example, Washington strongly backed the construction of Nabucco, a pipeline project that was designed to deliver gas from Azerbaijan to Europe.

Other US measures include efforts to develop a transatlantic approach toward Russia. An indicative example is the US proposal for the creation of the EU-US Energy Council. The Council fosters strategic cooperation on energy security between the EU and the US, and one of its priorities is the diversification of energy supplies away from Russia. Perhaps one of the most exciting findings of this study is that many ideas expressed and supported in the context of the EU-US Energy Council, and later adopted at the EU level, are very similar to those expressed by US officials or found in the US official documents. Even more interesting is that the very same ideas have been expressed in declassified US documents during the Cold War, long before energy security became a concern in Europe (See chapter Five).

Period	State of competition	Impact of GP competition on the development of European energy security policy
2004-2014	The US is the dominant global power, but the recovery of the Russian economy and the modernisation of the Russian military sector raises concerns in Washington Increase in occurrence of clashes over incompatible interests ▪ Orange Revolution (2004) ▪ Expansion of NATO (2004) ▪ Ukraine gas crisis (2006) ▪ US support for extending MAP for Ukraine and Georgia (2008) ▪ Georgian War (2008) ▪ Ukraine gas crisis (2009) 'Reset'in the US-Russian relations in 2009, but positive momentum ended with Putin's return to power. US and Russian interests clash over several areas: ▪ US support of political opposition in Russia ▪ Russia's NGO laws ▪ Post-Soviet Space → US-Russian competition intensifies	→ The reliance of US European allies on Russian gas is increasingly seen as a threat to US interests in Europe. **Russia:** ▪ South Stream and Nord Stream divided Europe: security of supply and lower gas prices outweighed any calls for solidarity with CEE countries; effectively delaying the development of a common energy policy in the EU ▪ Recruited top European politicians to South Stream and Nord Stream I top posts ▪ Offered special energy deals to major European powers → delayed the development of a common European energy security policy **US:** ▪ Backed alternative gas pipelines to Europe ▪ Proposed the establishment of the EU-US Energy Council to exchange information and coordinate with Brussels and on energy-related matters ▪ Supports the development of the Southern Corridor and east-to-west and west-to-east interconnection of infrastructure in Eastern Europe ▪ US officials visit European capitals to convince Europeans to diversify their gas supplies away from Russia or pull out from Russian pipeline projects in Europe → accelerated the development of a common European energy security policy

Table 12 Summary table of the impact of GP competition on European security energy policy between 2004-2014.

Source: Created by the author

Other measures include high US official visits to European capitals to convince Gazprom's European partners to pull out from Russian pipeline projects in Europe. This study found that this measure proved particularly effective in the case of the South Stream pipeline, as the announcement of the cancellation of the pipeline came the same day that US Senators met with the Bulgarian Prime Minister during their visit to Sofia.

Overall, to restrict Russian gas exports to Europe and reduce its European allies' dependence on Russian gas between 2004 and 2014, Washington adopted several measures. By repeatedly presenting Europe's reliance on Russian gas as a threat to European security, coordinating with Brussels and strengthening the intra-EU voices that lobbied the development of a common external energy policy towards Russia, the US accelerated the development of a common Europe an energy security policy.

The last case study (Chapter Eight) demonstrated that as relations between the US and Russia further deteriorated following Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014, and the competition intensified, the impact of the measures that Moscow and Washington adopted on European energy security further increased (see Table 13).

For example, Russia's plans to build Nord Stream II as part of its route diversification policy left Europe again divided, despite its significant progress in the energy domain. While pipeline supporters see the project as a way to enhance energy security in Europe, Nord Stream II opponents interpreted the pipeline as another Russian tool to divide Europe, 'kill' the Energy Union and increase the Kremlin's influence in Europe.

In the case of the US, the analysis of a large number of strategic documents and US officials speeches show that between 2015 and 2019, the United States was more concerned about Russia's gas exports to Europe than ever before in the post-Cold War era. Moreover, Chapter Eight found that Washington was also worried about the threats emanating from the vast revenues that the export of Russian gas generated during this time. This is because US

national security experts and officials suggested that increased exports could translate into a more confident and aggressive Russia on the international scene, one that could pose a threat to US national interests.

Thus, it is not surprising that between 2014 and 2019, the US was more determined than ever to stop the construction of the Nord Stream II pipeline and reduce the reliance of US European allies on Russian gas. During this time, the US exerted significant pressure on Germany to suspend the construction of the pipeline and backed Poland's anti-Nord Stream II position. The case study results on Nord Stream II show that while the US pressure on Germany had little impact on Nord Stream II, by backing the Polish anti-Nord Stream II position, Washington strengthened Warsaw's voice against the construction of the pipeline both inside and outside the EU.

However, all the evidence points to the fact that Washington's most effective measure when it comes to halting the construction of Nord Stream II was the imposition of Nord Stream-II-related sanctions in December of 2019. As a result of these sanctions, Gazprom's pipelaying contractor, Allseas, announced the suspension of work on building Nord Stream II. The sanctions divided EU member states, showing just how divided the EU was over energy partnership with Russia.

Moreover, during this time, the US continued the coordination of energy security matters with Brussels via the EU-US Energy Council. Although the lack of access to the minutes of these meetings makes it challenging to conclude how much influence Washington has had on EU energy policy via the Council, without doubt, the platform gave US policymakers regular access to those who are in charge of the Energy Union.

It is also essential to note that the EU-US Energy Council press releases show that the diversification of supplies away from Russia — an idea that the US has been promoting since the Cold War era — has been the main priority of Council meetings. Considering that the

Energy Union was proposed and established in response to the threat emanating from the increased dependence on Russian natural gas, and the US has strongly supported the diversification of supplies away from Russian gas, Washington's support for the development of a common energy security policy in EU can be logically concluded.

Period	State of competition	Impact of GP competition on the development of European energy security policy
2014-2019	Relations between the US and Russia further deteriorate ▪ Annexation of Crimea (2014) ▪ Moscow's support of separatism in Eastern ▪ Syrian crisis ▪ the alleged Russian meddling in the 2016 US Presidential elections → the competition between the US and Russia further intensifies	→ the expansion of Russian gas infrastructure to Europe presents a threat to the US. Russia: ▪ Nord Stream II divided Europe: security of supply and lower gas prices outweighed calls for solidarity with CEE countries → delayed the development of a common European energy security policy US: ▪ Exerted pressure on Gazprom's European partners, such as Germany, to withdraw from the project ▪ Backed anti-Nord Stream II position ▪ Imposed Nord Stream II-related sanctions ▪ Coordinated with Brussels on energy-related matters via the EU-US Energy Council ▪ Encouraged speaking with one voice against Russia → accelerated the development of a common European energy security policy

Table 13 Summary table of the impact of GP competition on European security energy policy between 2014-2019.

Overall, all three case studies presented strong confirming evidence of the impact of the Great Power competition on European energy politics, thus confirming the hypothesis. The

analysed materials show that the more intense the Great Power competition was, the greater was its impact on European energy politics and the development of common energy security policy in the EU. Evidence demonstrates that the European energy sector was most affected by Great Power competition during the Cold War (1980-1990) and between 2015 and 2019; this is also when the competition between the US and Russia was more intense.

At this stage, it is important to stress once again that this study cannot speak in terms of certainty due to the epistemological position of the researcher. The best this study can do is attempt to reach a plausible conclusion about the phenomenon under investigation and offer plausible arguments consistent with the evidence.

Nevertheless, the confirmation of the hypothesis greatly strengthens confidence in the Two-Level Model. The evidence point to the fact that not only did the model make an accurate prediction, but there is now a new phenomenon that Neoclassical Realism accounts for.

Other factors that affected the development of a common European energy security policy

The case studies examined reveal that even though Great Power competition affected the development of a common European energy security policy, other important factors have also played a significant role in the establishment of the Energy Union. For example, Chapter Five shows that the 2004 and 2007 EU enlargements played a significant role in the evolution of the European energy policy. Due to their strained relations with Moscow, the new members (former members of the Eastern bloc) saw the increased European reliance on Russian gas as a threat to their energy and national security. Therefore, since joining the EU, they have pushed for the diversification of supplies away from Russia and the development of a common EU energy security policy towards Russia.

Chapter Five also found that the progress made toward the creation of a common energy security policy in the EU in the post-Cold War era, and the Energy Union itself, was a response

to Russia related crises, such as the 2006 and 2009 Russia-Ukraine gas crises and the annexation of Crimea in 2014. If it were not for these crises, member states would not support the transfer of energy policy-making powers to European institutions with the inclusion of the energy chapter in the Lisbon Treaty. However, it is important to note that these crises were essentially a result of geopolitical rivalry between the US-dominated West and Russia and, more specifically, a result of Russia's effort to prevent Ukraine from becoming more aligned with NATO and the European Union. In the absence of competition between the US and Russia, these crises would not have taken place. Therefore, it is safe to say that in any case, Great Power competition has affected the development of a common European energy security policy, even if the impact was not direct or easily discernible.

Other findings

Another important finding of this study is related to Russia's motives behind building the gas pipeline projects in Europe. Some of the prior studies implied that South Stream and Nord Stream I were designed to serve Moscow's strategic interests and lacked commercial rationale (Baran, 2008; Cohen, 2009c). The findings of this study are consistent with those of Larsson (2008), who found that the pipelines were driven by commercial and political interests. Similarly, the case study on the Nord Stream II found that the pipeline is justifiable from the commercial point of view.

More specifically, the examined materials show that all three pipeline projects were launched as part of the Kremlin's route diversification policy – in response to the 2006 and later to 2009 gas crises. It also found that the claims that suggest that the pipelines are political projects that make no sense commercially are inaccurate. However, the materials analysed also point to the fact that while all three pipelines are justifiable from the commercial point of view, there is little doubt that they could also serve political purposes. This is evident in several

strategic documents that highlight that Russia is prepared to use all available means to protect its interests in a changing world.

Another significant finding of this study is that the US is willing to sacrifice its special relationship with European states to protect its interests. The materials analysed reveal that Washington's view is that a sustainable and effective policy toward Russia requires a close partnership among Western democracies, including stronger and more effective collective defence arrangements. In this endeavour, the US maintains a strong leadership role, holds consultations to build consensus within the alliance and cushions intra-alliance disagreements over Russia policy. However, evidence also shows that while for Washington, the support of the US strategy is very important, the US may on occasion also act to protect its interests without the support of its allies. In fact, Washington would act even in the face of opposition from traditional friends and allies.

The materials analysed for this study show that Washington, on several occasions in the past, has demonstrated that it is prepared to sacrifice its relations with allies to contain Moscow's growing power and influence.

This is hardly surprising and entirely consistent with the predictions of Structural Realism which expects that the great powers would strive to prevent the rise of rival powers. As this study has demonstrated, the US efforts to prevent the construction of Russian pipelines and the export of more Russian gas to Europe were aimed at containing the growing Russian power and influence in Europe to maintain US primacy in the region.

In summary, several interesting findings that will have a significant implication for research in this field emerged from this research project. These findings demonstrate the importance of studying the development of a common European energy security policy in the context of Great Power competition.

Limitations and Future Research

Limitations

Several limitations emerged during the course of this study. One of the limitations had to do with the application of the Two-Level Neoclassical Realist Model to the first case study. Although the Two-Level Model has advanced our knowledge of the phenomenon under investigation, as it helped to explain the behaviour of the US and Russia on Great Power Level (Level 1), as noted in an earlier section, it shed little light on the Intra-European Level (Level 2). This can be attributed to the fact that the focus of the first case study, on Level 2, was on the EU institutions, and more specifically on the EU Commission – as opposed to the other two case studies that focused on EU member states. Since the main 'recipients' of the systemic pressure and the main drivers of energy policy in the EU are the member states, the focus on EU institutions revealed little about the phenomenon under investigation. The Two-Level Model worked well in the other two case studies.

A second limitation of this study is related to research methodologies and methods not selected. Several different methods for collecting data were considered for this study. However, some of these were not selected for this research project either because more suitable alternatives were available or for practical reasons.

First, it is important to note that due to the nature of the research question, quantitative methods such as questionnaires and surveys would have little to offer, as these generate primarily statistical data. Statistical data could not provide the level of depth and detail required in order to answer the research question. For this reason, qualitative methods were chosen over quantitative.

However, not all qualitative methods were used for this study. For example, although the researcher intended to conduct semi-structured interviews - the ethical application

submitted was approved in 2017 – due to the nature of the topic, very few interviews were conducted. Although a large number of policymakers were contacted in order to conduct elite interviews, there was little positive response. Those that responded positively can be categorised into two groups. Interviewees in the first group, while initially agreeing to be interviewed, later declined to answer the questions. Interviewees in the second groups agreed to the interview but were hesitant to speak about the phenomenon under investigation. Thus, the information they offered was not particularly useful for this study. For these reasons, interviews have not been used for this research project. Although this thesis has explained and justified why interviews were not selected for this study as a method of data collection, it is recognised that the failure to use interviews for this research project is an apparent limitation in this study.

Future Research

There are ample opportunities for further research related to this study. First, there is an opportunity to reformulate the theoretical model used in this study to allow its application to cases studying the impact of Great Power competition on supranational organisations such as the EU. In this way, further insights into the impact of Great Power competition on the EU's behaviour in a wide range of cases could be produced.

Furthermore, the Two-Level Neoclassical Model developed for this study could be used to examine the impact of US-Russian competition on states' behaviour in any other part of the world (for example, the post-Soviet space, Central Asia). It could also be used to study the impact of the US-China or Russia-China competition on smaller states' behaviour.

Finally, further research could be conducted in future to build on the findings of this study by using methods not selected in this research project. For instance, if access were gained to policymakers willing to share their experience and knowledge in the field, further details

and insights into the impact of US-Russian competition on the development of a common European energy security policy could be produced.

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